

# AINSLIE'S

THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS

B. 1919

20 CTS.



# Stenographers Typists

---

You are urged to enter the Government service for important work in connection with the plans of reconstruction.

Women especially may thus aid in the nation's great effort. Men also are needed.

Tests are given in 550 cities every Tuesday.

Full information and application blanks may be obtained from the secretary of the board of United States Civil Service Examiners at the post office or customhouse in any important city.

JOHN A. McILHENNY,  
President U. S. Civil Service Commission,  
Washington, D. C.

# The world's greatest catalog of music

## A book every music-lover will want

New Edition  
free at any Victor dealer's



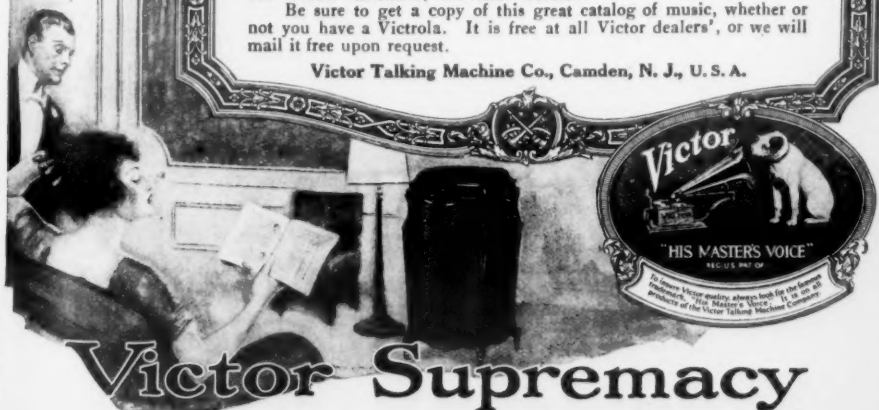
This great book of more than 500 pages, with over 200 portraits and illustrations, is the world's best guide to the enjoyment of music; the index to the greatest library of music ever collected—a living library of the wonderful musical achievements of the world's greatest artists.

It is the only record catalog in which any selection can be found instantly under the name of the composition, the composer or the artist.

It contains brief sketches of the most popular operas and illustrations of the scenes; pronunciation of foreign names; biographies of prominent composers; complete Red Seal section with portraits and biographies of the world's greatest artists; list of selected records for new Victor customers, and other features.

Be sure to get a copy of this great catalog of music, whether or not you have a Victrola. It is free at all Victor dealers', or we will mail it free upon request.

Victor Talking Machine Co., Camden, N. J., U. S. A.



# Victor Supremacy

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

# AINSLIE'S

*The Magazine That Entertains*

## CONTENTS

Cover Design . . . . .	William de Leftwich Dodge	
Aurora Janeway. Complete Novelette . . . . .	Marie Conway Oemler . . . . .	1
Pierrot the Conjuror. Verse . . . . .	William Griffith . . . . .	52
The Girl From Hibbsville. Short Story . . . . .	Arthur Crabb . . . . .	53
The Baking of Man. Verse . . . . .	D E Wheeler . . . . .	65
Illustrated. Short Story . . . . .	Margaretta Tuttle . . . . .	66
The Desert Garden. Verse . . . . .	Clark Ashton Smith . . . . .	80
Wanted: a Blemish. Short Story . . . . .	Jessie E. Henderson and Henry J. Buxton . . . . .	81
A Visit to the Asylum. Verse . . . . .	Edna St. Vincent Millay . . . . .	91
Whom the Sea Loves. Short Story . . . . .	Clement Wood . . . . .	92
To Grace. Verse . . . . .	Charles Agnew MacLean . . . . .	100
More Super-Women. Series . . . . .	Anice Terhune . . . . .	101
Hortense Mancini: The Butterfly Siren.		
The Golden Girl. Short Story . . . . .	Emily H. Callaway . . . . .	108
For Poets Slain in War. Verse . . . . .	Walter Adolphe Roberts . . . . .	117
The Effervescence of Nicolette. Series V.—The Lieutenant and the Vampire.	Josephine A. Meyer . . . . .	118
The Blind Mole. Short Story . . . . .	Ernest Pascal . . . . .	126
So Love Has Taught Me. Verse . . . . .	Salomón de la Selva . . . . .	130
The Neglected Garden. Serial . . . . .	Henry C. Rowland . . . . .	131
"I Planted Once a Garden." Verse . . . . .	Du Vernet Rabell . . . . .	150
Kisses and Kissing. Short Story . . . . .	Garnet Warren . . . . .	151
The Dead Lover. Verse . . . . .	Harry Kemp . . . . .	153
Ainslee's Book of the Month Plays and Players . . . . .	Alan Dale . . . . .	155
The Bitterest Thing. Verse . . . . .	Mary Carolyn Davies . . . . .	159
Talks With Ainslee's Readers . . . . .		160

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, \$2.00

SINGLE COPIES, TWENTY CENTS

Monthly publication issued by AINSLEE MAGAZINE CO., Seventh Avenue and Fifteenth Street, New York. OLAVO G. SARIN, President; OLAVO C. SARIN, Secretary and Treasurer, 79-69 Seventh Avenue, New York City. Copyright, 1919, by Ainslee Magazine Co., New York. Copyright, 1919, by Ainslee Magazine Co., Great Britain. All Rights Reserved. Publishers everywhere are cautioned against using any of the contents of this Magazine either wholly or in part. Entered as Second-class Matter, September 11, 1905, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. Canadian subscription, \$2.35. Foreign, \$2.75.

WARNING—Do not subscribe through agents unknown to you. Complaints are daily made by persons who have been thus victimized.

IMPORTANT—Authors, agents, and publishers are requested to note that this firm does not hold itself responsible for loss of unsolicited manuscripts while at this office or in transit; and that it cannot undertake to hold unsolicited manuscripts for a longer period than six months. If the return of manuscript is expected, postage should be inclosed.



"We are advertised by our loving friends"

# A Mellin's Food Girl



Mildred E. Cleveland ~ Giberton, Ga.

Mellin's Food is a means by which the mother can modify cow's milk to satisfy every food requirement of her baby.

*Send today for a Sample Bottle of Mellin's Food  
and start your baby right.*

MELLIN'S FOOD COMPANY,

BOSTON, MASS.



We guarantee at any time during the first year of your enrollment to refund the entire amount paid if immediately upon the completion of ten examinations you notify the school that you are not satisfied with your Course.

## DARE YOU GUARANTEE YOUR SERVICE?

Will you guarantee your service to your employer as we guarantee our service to you? CAN you? Think it over. Think what "absolute satisfaction" means in dollars and cents—if you can deliver it. Guaranteed service is simply the difference between "getting by" and GETTING ON. If you are only "getting by," if you aren't increasing your earning power, or if you can't guarantee your service, then you need and should get specialized training.

## We Guarantee Our Training

Make no mistake about that! When we undertake to make you a skilled worker in your line, we absolutely and unreservedly guarantee to satisfy you insofar as quality and thoroughness of training go. We accept students on no other basis but that of satisfaction or money back. 25 years' experience enables us to stand back of our work. We know HOW well enough to guarantee our service to you. You risk nothing by enrolling. You can't lose a cent. Our training will enable you to guarantee your service because of your training. That means the position you want, and bigger pay.

## Training Decides Pay

There's no question about it. You get paid for only what you can DO. That depends on what you KNOW. Increase your knowledge with one of our practical Courses and your earning power increases accordingly. You can train at home in your spare time—backed by the assurance that we guarantee to satisfy you. There are no strings to that offer. Let us send you our Free Bulletin and full details. Check and mail the coupon TODAY.

## AMERICAN SCHOOL of Correspondence, Dept. C-1081, Chicago



TRAINING—THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Please send me booklet and tell me how I can fit myself for the position marked X:

- |                          |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| .... High School Course  | .... Shop Superintendent    |
| .... Electrical Engineer | .... Lawyer                 |
| .... Telephone Engineer  | .... Business Manager       |
| .... Architect           | .... Auditor                |
| .... Draftsman           | .... Certified Public Acc't |
| .... Building Contractor | .... Stenographer           |
| .... Structural Engineer | .... Bookkeeper             |
| .... Mechanical Engineer | .... Fire Ins. Adjuster     |
| .... Civil Engineer      | .... Sanitary Engineer      |
| .... Steam Engineer      | .... Automobile Engineer    |

Name .....

Address .....

## How Peace Affects You

"I know there is going to be keener competition for the real good jobs from now on. I know that the good salaries are going to be paid to the men who have had the foresight to train themselves for the responsible positions.

"I know, too, from my observation of successful business men, that law training is the most valuable asset a business man can have today in the period of readjustment."

JUST as our correspondent says: Law training gives a man a broader viewpoint of business and opens the way to greater success. This is because the foundation of all business is law.

Many successful men build their careers on a legal foundation—men like Gary of the Steel Corporation, Babot of the American Sugar Refining Company, Tomlinson of the National Biscuit Company, and hundreds of others. A few hours of your spare time each week spent in the enjoyable occupation of following the Modern American Law Course and Service of the Blackstone Institute gives you a valuable asset for the future.

Behind the Course are such men as ex-President Taft, George P. Sutherland, former President of the American Bar Association; Joseph E. Davies, formerly Chairman of the Federal Trade Commission.

## Free Book—"The Law-Trained Man"

Send for our 118 page free book at once. Writing for it obligates you in no way. Find out for yourself how much law training would help you to advance yourself. Write to us now.

## BLACKSTONE INSTITUTE

The foremost non-resident Law Course in the country  
Dept. 251, 608 So. Dearborn St. Chicago, Illinois



## FREE BOOK



## Learn Piano

### This Interesting Free Book

shows how you can become a skilled player of piano or organ in your own home at one-quarter usual cost. Dr. Quinn's famous Written Method is endorsed by leading musicians and heads of State Conservatories. Successful 15 years. Play chords at once and play notes to every key, within 4 lessons. Scientific yet oversimplified. Fully illustrated. For beginners or teachers, old or young. All-time free. Diploma granted. Write today for 64-page free book, "How to Learn Piano." M. L. Quinn Conservatory, Studio AB, Social Union Bldg., Boston, Mass.

## WRITERS' SPECIAL SERVICE

Consists of a trenchant, constructive CRITICISM. Itemizes the STRONG and WEAK points. Gives Market Advice and adds at least FIVE COUNSELS for the IMPROVEMENT of all work.

M. C. TELFER, Metuchen, N. J.  
Formerly chief critic and fiction Instructor of the Editor.

Man, 5,000 words or less, \$2. 10,000 or less, \$3. Special rates for longer work.

Submit your Song-Poems NOW for free examination and edition.

We revise poems, compose music of any description, secure copyright and employ original methods for facilitating FREE PUBLICATION or outright SALE of songs under a certificate GUARANTEE. ING you satisfaction.

**SONG WRITERS' MANUAL & GUIDE SENT FREE**  
Card from you a copy of our Free Book and tell you who we are, explains our methods and contains valuable information and instructions. This is your opportunity to learn the truth regarding the best writing profession from a reliable and successful song KNICKERBOCKER STUDIOS. 74 Galey Bldg., N. Y. City

## AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE

is printed with inks manufactured by  
**W. D. WILSON PRINTING INK CO., LTD.,**

17 SPRUCE STREET, NEW YORK CITY

# AINSLEE'S

VOL. XLIII.

FEBRUARY, 1919.

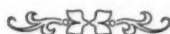
No. 1.



## Aurora Janeway

By Marie Conway Oemler

Author of "Lost Ladies," "To Be a Woman," etc.



### CHAPTER I.

**S**IMMONS," said the tall young man in the purple dressing gown, "reach for that fat green cushion and put it under my feet, please. I have a wish to resemble Petrarch's Laura in my color combination. She was in purple and green, like a bunch of violets, when the old fellow first cut an eye at her. Result—immortality, in what is known as the sonnet. How do I know, Simmons, that there mayn't be a sonnet or two tucked away somewhere in your cosmos?"

The divan upon which the young man reclined, sultanlike, was so exotic to the prim, grim little room that Simmons called his office that only the young sybarite himself could explain or justify its presence.

Simmons, who looked exactly like the room without the divan, rose from his desk, carefully tucked the largest and handsomest of satin sofa cushions under the young gentleman's purple-and-gold slippers, and went back to his occupation of measuring out drops and counting pills and tablets. The odor of drugs spread through the room. Young

Mr. Francis Courtenay sniffed, frowned, turned his beautiful head gracefully, and watched Simmons with mild interest in his large dark eyes.

"Simmons," he wondered, "do you resemble your father or your mother? I inquire because of a grave doubt in my mind concerning you."

"Yes, Mr. Francis?"

Simmons' eyes, the color of a dead mullet, expressed no emotion of any sort whatsoever. In his discreet countenance and impenetrably polite manner, one recognized the confidential manservant raised to the *n*th power. Mr. Francis had frequently assured him that, on the Day of Judgment, his soul would arise glorious and immortal in a pair of pepper-and-salt trousers, a black coat, and a white tie.

Having finished his task of measuring drops, he set pills and glasses upon a tray, covered it with an iron-stiff white linen square, and turned to the young man respectfully.

"You were about to observe, Mr. Francis?"

"I was about to ask," said the young man seriously, "if you were ever born, Simmons."

"I think I am safe in asserting that such was the case, sir."

"But you can't be sure, you know," protested the young man. "Isn't it just barely possible that your mother may have picked you off a bush and, remarking, 'Here is an eminently conservative and respectable child, an astonishingly safe and sane child, my dear,' presented you to your admiring father?"

"My mother," said Simmons, "was quite incapable of such a piece of folly. She was an eminently respectable and conservative person herself."

"That's just what puzzles me," said the young man. "I know she was. She had to be. And yet I'm convinced that you arrived on the scene in pepper-and-salt breeches, a starched shirt, and a turndown collar. And you knew everything about everybody from the beginning of days."

Simmons was spared the necessity of replying to this persiflage by a bell, violently and viciously jerked, jangling at his elbow.

"Your uncle," said he succinctly.

The young man returned his look with a lifting of his arched black brows that lent an impertinent and slightly supercilious touch to his dark and handsome face. His black eyes began to sparkle.

"Regularly on the champ, Sim?"

"Furious! This is the second car and the fourth plate-glass show window, you know, Mr. Francis. Dutton's lawyers talked of a suit. It cost your uncle quite a tidy sum, sir."

"But I've told you it was either the window or the widow," said Mr. Francis Courtenay impatiently. "What shall one do when a rusty-black widow gets right in front of one's car? I took the pavement, of course—and all the thanks I get for risking my neck is that Dutton's lawyers row about a broken show window, and my uncle goes up in the air over a check!"

"It isn't the first window, nor the first check—nor even the first car," said Simmons inexorably.

"Well, I *could* have run over the widow," admitted Frank. "It would only have meant a trifling little charge of manslaughter, and the devil, the lawyers, and the undertaker to pay. My uncle is unreasonable, I'm afraid. You might remind him, too, Simmons, that I deliberately took my valuable life in my hand—not to mention that ornamental and delightful person's, Miss Dolly Tredegar's. Why, I might have broken one of her million-dollar legs!" This with a consciously virtuous air that brought a twist to Simmons' thin lips.

"I would rather *not* remind him of the—ah—young lady just at this moment, sir," he hinted.

"It would be a kind deed to remind him of anything so pleasant."

"He disapproves of Miss Dolly Tredegar. I might even say that he disapproves of her with great violence," said Simmons.

"He disapproves," said his uncle's nephew, "of anything and anybody that even remotely suggests something pleasant. I suppose," he grumbled, "that I'm regularly in for it again, Simmy?"

"Well, Mr. Francis, three o'clock in the morning is no time to come home—well, vociferously. He was awake. And you were singing—not a godly air, sir. Anything but."

"Poor old Martin's stag. As a friend and sympathizer, I was one of those who sought to enliven his last hours. Perhaps the wake was a trifle frisky, but," with a shake of the black head, "when one of your friends is about to get himself married, Simmons, you will strain a point. You will feign a fictitious mirth, to gild his few free hours with a sickly sunshine. Just as I did. At three o'clock this morning, I left him, and I sang to keep up my spirits. Why, even the police were sympathetic!

They'd seen a chap's friends married before! Yet in my own home I find no sympathy, only a cold, hard, unfeeling blame!" His beautiful dark eyes reproached the moved Simmons. "There's nothing left for me to do except go to bed and try to sleep off my injured feelings," said the young man, with dignity.

"Your uncle stays awake to nurse his," said Simmons anxiously. "You know, Mr. Francis, how he feels about—certain things. And you provoke him. You disappoint him. If you would only take even a mild interest in *anything* that pleases him—but you won't, you don't! You seem to take pleasure only in those things and—persons—that displease him very much."

"When I'm fifty-four, with a grouch, a soul like a boil, a liver on strike, and the temper of a hyena, I'll be just as hellishly good as he is, Simmons—I swear I will! I'll admire ladies with a mission and without a shape, just as I now admire them with a shape and without a mission. I'll be as disagreeably virtuous as the sourest saint could demand. And I hope to Heaven you'll have to live with me, Simmons, and see how you like it, confound you!"

"Your uncle——"

"If my uncle were a worse man, he'd be a very much better one," said the young man. "He should allow pleasant people to amuse him, instead of trying to make unpleasant ones edify him! He's got the notion he's saving his soul when he isn't doing anything but losing his temper." He kicked the green cushion from under his feet, and sauntered off, his purple dressing gown trailing after him.

Again the bell jangled.

"Mr. Francis!"

Mr. Francis turned, to meet the old man's anxious eyes.

"Mr. Francis, he means things—this time. I——"

"You," said the young man, "are an old duck. One of these days"—he looked down at the smaller man affectionately—"when he turns me out o' doors, I'll get you to adopt me."

Simmons sighed, shook his head, and picked up his tray.

The gentleman to whom he tendered the tray's unsavory contents accepted them with grim fortitude. Life itself was a medicine to Jordan Courtenay, and he thought it showed morality of a high order to take it unsweetened.

Mr. Jordan Courtenay was bothered by an ingrowing soul and an outrageous liver, and was in process of becoming that most arrant of nuisances, a wealthy semi-invalid. He disapproved of his nephew and heir, but if there was one thing he loved, it was this same young Francis, whose beauty, joyousness, and charm gave him a secret pride and pleasure. He didn't mind the boy's spending money. Let him spend it, but let him spend it virtuously. And Frank didn't, and wouldn't. He roved with a herd of wild asses as unbitted and unbridled as himself, was careless, being used to too much, and lacked, his uncle considered, a proper sense of moral issues.

"My Uncle Jordan," Frank had said once, "can and generally does point a moral. He couldn't adorn a tale to save his life—but I can." And he did. Several.

The tales fretted his uncle. Wherefore, he made up his mind to save the sinner.

Now how shall one most quickly bring a gay young man to mend his ways and learn a proper respect for proper courses? By chaining him to a wife, of course—and picking out the wife yourself. That's what Mr. Courtenay tried to do. And Frank wouldn't. The two locked horns, and the younger man came off victorious.

Other shortcomings had of late been

peculiarly aggravating. His nephew was, Jordan Courtenay considered, hardened in frivolity. Haunter of greenrooms, profligate spender, darling of many women, Frank showed the whites of his fine eyes at the godly, laid his ears back flat at the mere mention of a social worker or an elder, and discovered in himself a pure abhorrence for any desire to probe, uplift, reform, investigate, castigate, impeach, or enlighten anything or anybody. You couldn't make him think of people as cases with numbers. He squandered money on vagabonds, and thereby hindered the operations of the incorporated benevolence his uncle believed in.

What had really brought Mr. Courtenay's displeasure to a head was his nephew's known and blazoned friendship with that most charming of dancers, Miss Dolly Tredegar. Pile up all Frank's sins of omission and commission on one side of the scale, put on the other side quicksilver, dancing Dolly, and, in the uncle's estimate, Dolly would have kicked the beam.

On this particular morning, Mr. Courtenay's mind was darkly filled with Dolly, the companion of Frank's latest expensive auto wreck. He swallowed his evil notions of her with his medicine, and found both abominably bitter.

"Simmons," said he sternly, "you've seen that infernal, lazy scoundrel this morning, eh? Damned truffle-stuffed lollydollypop!" The occasional letting fly of a healthy "damn" was his one saving vice. As he spoke, he glared at the clock, upon the stroke of one.

"The bishop called, sir," said Simmons sedately. "But as you were asleep, we thought it better not to wake you. His kind regards, sir, and he'll call again to-morrow."

His voice was the sucking dove's, his manner exquisitely respectful, both to the bishop and to Mr. Courtenay. Yet the latter choked.

"You're as big a fool as you look!"

he snarled. "Why the devil do you mention the bishop now, eh?"

"Mr. Burleigh-Smith called, sir. Something about Goldbrick Copper, I gathered. You're to sign some papers, which he left. I have them in my desk, Mr. Courtenay."

"Burleigh-Smith?" Mr. Courtenay's voice rose to a roar. "Who's talking about Burleigh-Smith, you flop-eared ass?"

"Doctor Forbes was here. He's slightly uneasy about your nerves. They do seem somewhat strained, sir, if I may mention it. And Mrs. van Vreelinghausen— Something about the scrubwomen's aid, sir; also a cup of tea with two crackers every other Wednesday at the chapter house, with talks by the ladies upon some improving subject. Mrs. van Vreelinghausen thinks it would be well if you endowed it, so they could afford to buy tea that the ladies themselves would be able to drink without fear of getting sick."

Mr. Courtenay's eyes took on a hard, bright, glacial glitter. He looked Simmons up and down, and after a gulping pause, broke forth in a husky, pleading whisper.

"Simmons," said he, "if you'll come near enough to let me hit you on the nose without upsetting my stomach, I'll give you a check for fifty dollars! Just one good wallop, Simmons! If I draw a gill of your scoundrelly blood, I'll make it a hundred, an even hundred! I swear I will, Simmons!"

"It wouldn't meet with Doctor Forbes' approval, sir. It is imperative that you should be calm, Mr. Courtenay."

Mr. Courtenay's eyes fell upon the small tray and the medicine glasses. There were three glasses and a small saucer. These he threw at his respectable manservant, adding the tray for good measure. One glass grazed Simmons' brindled skull and left in its wake a trickle of brown-colored liquid of an



evil odor. Simmons wiped it off, picked up tray and broken glasses, and, remarking composedly, "You get your broth and toast in ten minutes, sir," moved toward the door.

"Simmons!" The master's hard eye lingered upon the spot where a little of the brown medicine remained, and he smiled malignantly. "Now, then, have you seen that infernal, lazy scoundrel, my nephew, Mr. Francis Courtenay, this morning? Don't stand there like a dashed bump on a log, Simmons! Have you seen him? What?"

"Mr. Francis?" Simmons looked pained and astonished. "You meant Mr. Francis, sir? Oh, yes, I've seen Mr. Francis this morning."

"Drunk, the young whelp? Soused, eh? Pickled, the reprobate?"

"Hadn't you better let me send for Doctor Forbes, sir? You do seem excited and nervous, Mr. Courtenay. No, sir, I should say that Mr. Francis was quite sober. He is generally quite sober, sir."

"Ah-ha! Sober as a judge when he rode into Dutton & Co's plate-glass window with a super-six, and came off with a dozen wax models in expensive duds mashed up in his wheels! I was sober enough, begad, when I paid the bill and listened to Dutton's attorneys! Sober, too, ain't he, when he goes rampagin' around with that Tredegar hussy—and I footing the bills? Nothing of the boiled owl about him when he comes rolling home at three in the morning, roaring like Bottom in the play, is there, Simmons? Simmons, take a hundred and twenty-five and let me black your eyes?"

"Mr. Francis hasn't blacked anybody's eyes yet, that I have heard of, sir," insinuated Simmons.

"You lie!" said the other. "It's not six months since I paid fifty dollars an eye to three policemen and you know it. But that's neither here nor there.

What I want you to do is to send me that fellow right now, this minute—hear me? If he's in bed, throw a bucket of water on him and turn him out. Lovely hour for a man to be in bed, like an old maid with the doldrums! When I was his age, I was up at four, winter and summer. I'd done a good day's work by this time. Now he can lie abed half the day, and get up and squander my money, the footless pup! You go tell him to come here at once, Simmons! What in the name of Beelzebub are you gobbering your mullet eyes at me for? Didn't you hear what I said? Get out!"

Tray in hand, Simmons got out.

## CHAPTER II.

Mr. Francis was splashing in his bath like a singing porpoise when Simmons called him.

"And he's in a fearful state of mind. I never saw him in such a state of mind," said the older man, with his mouth against the keyhole. "So I beg of you, Mr. Francis, to handle him gently, sir."

"Um-m-m-m," came the reply.

"Mr. Francis! Couldn't you *pretend* to agree with him? Pr-promise him *anything*," said Simmons desperately, "until he gets over this fit! For the Lord's sake, don't cross him! He's like a stick of dynamite, sir, he is indeed."

Another prodigious splash; then Mr. Francis blithely:

"Go 'way from that keyhole, you old corrupter and briber, you! Don't you recognize the fact that you're a venal rascal, Simmons? Where do you expect to go when you die if you behave like this?"

"I don't know and I don't care!" hissed the goaded Simmons. "It's where *you'll* be apt to go while you're alive that's troubling me just now.



Will you hurry up, Mr. Francis? The longer he waits, the worse he'll be!"

Mr. Francis presently emerged, waved a slim hand at the anxious Simmons, dashed into his room, and came forth immaculate. Simmons sighed with relief at sight of him.

"He can't be angry with him, not really angry," Simmons thought dotingly. "It's not in human flesh and blood to stay angry with such."

The young man greeted his uncle pleasantly, with a friendly deference to the other's supposed ill health. Scowling, purse-mouthed, his uncle pointed to a chair, which was declined.

"It's a missionary chair, a preliminary training for possible martyrdom," said Frank smilingly. "How thoughtful of you to provide it for your clerical callers, Uncle Jord! I'll take the table, instead, if you don't mind."

He pushed aside two or three "Blue Books" and a copy of the *Christian Year* and seated himself, long legs swinging, fine hands dropped idly between his knees. His uncle grunted.

"I have sent for you, young man," he began severely, "to make you understand, once and for all, that I disapprove so strongly of your course of life, your amusements, your friends, that something's got to be done. You're a he-butterfly, begad! A dashed tinsel-winged he-butterfly—that's what you are, Nephew Francis! All right, then, be one! But fly around proper flowers in decent gardens. You shan't fly around the Dolly Tredegar sort of weeds—not with my money and consent! That's flat and final!"

Frank regarded him with a gentle scrutiny, under which the older man changed color, and his choler mounted soaringly.

"Hark 'ee, sir!" said he purple-jowled. "So far, Master Frank, I've paid the piper for your prancing. Now you'll dance to my measure or you'll

jig to your own tune and pay your own piper!"

"I didn't know," said Frank equably, "that you approved of dancing under any circumstances."

"Since you see fit to take me literally," said his uncle ominously, "I'll remind you that David leaped and danced before the ark of the Lord. Saul's daughter choosing to laugh, he put her away from him. He put her away from him," he repeated, "and had nothing more to do with her—forever."

"Unreasonable old boy, David. Must have been a rotten dancer to have been so touchy."

"You are not such a fool as to misunderstand my meaning, nephew. And when I said I pay the piper, I meant it literally. Good, hard American dollars—millions of them—if you please me. But if you caper any more with such as that Tredegar wench, you'll caper to a 'Beggar's Opera' of your own composing."

A spark came into the young man's fine eyes, a deeper red crept into his cheek. He sat up.

"Money," said his uncle solemnly, "is a trust. I have used mine, except where you are concerned, well enough. I have not spent foolishly. My tastes are simple, my desires few. My extravagances are nonexistent. I hold my fortune, sir, as a trust."

Frank still continuing to regard him thoughtfully, the older man lifted up his voice.

"I said I hold my money as a trust!" he shouted. "I use it as the Lord directs!"

"And so the Lord," mused Frank, "is a director for a trust! How very, very up to the minute and modern of him!"

Ensued a grim and grisly pause. The young man's mouth set, and his eyes took on a sword-straight directness. He slipped off the table and stood up, tall and young. Of a sudden, the

likeness between the two men stood out startlingly.

"You are incorrigible!" raged his uncle. "Why," with biting contempt, "you haven't even got sense enough to safeguard your own interests! And do you imagine that I shall allow you to handle a great fortune? *You?* A fortune that might be made of great and incalculable blessing to mankind, and that I," he added deliberately, "hold in trust from the Lord?"

And Frank admired him, for his obstinacy and his courage.

"No, sir! I shall not put into incompetent hands such power! You have no convictions. You have no purpose. You are at heart a pagan. Your friends are pagans. You are a trifler, Mr. Francis Bennington Courtenay, my brother's son and my supposed heir! You wouldn't even marry to please me! Oh, no! All *you* can do is to ride helter-skelter to the devil, with your painted-face, play-acting, dancing hus-sies of Dollies!"

"Miss Dolly Tredegar," said Frank quietly, in a curiously distinct voice, "is a good woman—as good as my mother or yours, and very much better than your sister, my Aunt Lydia. I dislike to air the family wash, the practice being unsanitary and unpleasant. And may I ask you not to mention Miss Tredegar's name again unless you can remember to be a gentleman? The lady happens to be rather a good friend of mine."

The two pairs of dark eyes locked.

"There is no law of lese majesty in this country—for the benefit of dancing women," said the older man, breathing quickly.

"Among decent men," said the other, "in all countries, there is a code, my uncle, which condemns the man who slanders a woman."

"You—you—why—you——" strangled the uncle.

"As a whole, your arraignment of

my personal character is far from unjust," said Frank. "I dare say I am, to a certain extent"—a sudden glint of laughter came to eyes and lips—"a he-butterfly. Allow me to congratulate you on the aptness of the illustration! Look here, Uncle Jordan. I suppose I *have* unduly tested your patience and your pocketbook. On the whole, you've stood it like a sport, so I don't mind telling you I'm just a bit bored of fluttering aimlessly, myself. But you mustn't try to marry me off to suit you instead of me. And you simply shan't heckle me into heaven. And you mustn't manhandle the reputations of my friends."

"I'll marry you to whom I dashed please!" bawled the other. "I'll haul you into heaven by the scruff of your puppy neck! As for manhandling your friends' reputations, none of 'em have any reputations to manhandle!" He shook his doubled-up fists. "Mustn't! Mustn't! D'ye understand I can beggar you, you young idiot?"

"You can cut off my income, of course. But there are some things you can't and shan't do. You shan't buy my soul alive, for one. Do you know what Colin Murray said to me once? He said your fortune was my misfortune—that I was slated for moral spinal curvature because of the position I'd have to assume to keep up with a domineering old plutocrat. Had us both sized up, didn't he?"

Mr. Courtenay grunted.

"While we're indulging in pleasing personalities, let me touch upon one or two of your own foibles," said Frank pleasantly. "One of 'em is that you insist upon wearing navy-blue eye goggles. You spell 'live' backward to make it 'evil.' And that's a bad habit. Cut out the uplift bunch of fakers, uncle, and you'll find the world's a heap more pleasant and decent than you think it is."

"Every word you utter," said his

uncle, with a heaving breast, "confirms my determination to safeguard my interests. I fear, nephew, that you are given over to Satan!"

"Oh, give the devil his due!" smiled Francis. "It's nothing but fair play!"

"I give every one his due. I pay for what I get. I propose now to *pay* you to please me. I consent to renounce my desire to see you married to Emily Burleigh-Smith." Here young Francis made a grimace, and his uncle added with severity: "A young lady your superior in every sense of the word! I do this because it would give you an excuse to be faithless and make her miserable. But this is my only concession. You shall at once enter Burleigh-Smith's office and learn something of the business that supports you in luxury. My nephew shall countenance and respect those friends and associates who aid all upward progress. And I insist that you finally and immediately cut yourself adrift from persons who, I am assured, are leading you to your downfall. Obey, and I make you. Disobey, and I break you. This is my last word."

"But I don't like Burleigh-Smith. I should be a round peg in a square hole, associated with him. Also, I'm not interested in your uplifters and reformers, who make a fat living exploiting the great unwashed. As for cutting out certain friends of mine, I suppose you mean Dolly Tredegar? Dolly's a decent little sort, and a good pal. Paws off my friends, Uncle Jordan! I'm afraid we're not going to agree. So I propose this—you keep your money. Your money's yours, to do with as you please—and may I say I'm rather tired of having it held over my head like a club? It makes things a bit sordid, don't you think?"

Mr. Jordan Courtenay sank back in his chair. In his way, he loved his nephew, with a jealous, exacting affection. Why, the boy was his. He had

raised him from babyhood, an orphan left to his care. Frank to defy him, dare to leave him? He stared with narrowed eyes at the comely face into which was dawning something better than its youthful beauty—an awakening spirit, self-reliant and manly. But it was a spirit as proud and stubborn as his own, a spirit that defied him, and he could not brook defiance. His lips came together in a straight line.

"You are such an utter young ass that I deem it my duty to warn you to consider very carefully what you are doing," he said. "You have nothing to gain, and everything to lose. Do you know that all you have in this world is your mother's pitiful bit of real estate, which will fetch you in a little over sixty dollars a month?"

"What? Have I got that much all my own?" cried Frank. "What luck! Wind tempered to the shorn lamb, and all that! How jolly!"

"Francis, reflect. This is final. Don't deceive yourself. This is final. Once you make your decision, it stands."

His face had grown grayer, and his hands trembled. Not lightly does one pluck out the light of one's eyes, the core of one's heart.

"I'm sorry, Uncle Jordan. But I can't please you as you want to be pleased without becoming a hypocrite." He drew a little nearer, with a certain wistfulness upon him. "Uncle Jord, try to believe I'm grateful for all the care you've taken of me, won't you? I may come in, sometimes, to have a look at you, mayn't I? And can't we shake hands and part as friends?"

But Jordan Courtenay thrust his shaking hands behind his back.

"No!" said he violently. "No! You're a cinder in my eye! I've got to get you out—and keep you out! I'll do but one thing more for you. When you've starved to death, I'll bury you with your own people, instead of letting

you rot in the potter's field. So don't ever ask me for any help—save your wind. My lawyers will see that you get your mother's pittance. Now get out!"

"I'm sorry you won't shake hands, Uncle Jord. If you change your mind about it, and want to see me, why, send for me, and I'll come. After all, you're my folks, you see. Good-by."

He leaned over, boyishly, and kissed his uncle on the cheek. Then he walked to the door, waved his hand, and was gone.

### CHAPTER III.

When her father married that battle-scarred veteran of social warfare, Lydia Haslett, née Courtenay, whose brilliant presentations to the divorce court periodically set society agog, Aurora Janeway was a pigtailed, leggy youngster in a church school. It is a mistake to suppose that leggy little girls in boarding schools don't know very much more than their prayers. They do. And it is to their eternal glory that, notwithstanding the mass of information and misinformation they gather catch as catch can, they still retain a clear-eyed purity, a buoyant hopefulness, and—a certain amount of respect for their elders. For Aurora still loved and respected her father, although he had married the notorious Mrs. Haslett.

That her girlhood was in a measure very happy was due to the fact that, after one baleful summer with her stepmother, Aurora refused to come home any more. The sisterhood prepared her for college, where she was second in her class, first in her classmates' estimation, captain of her team, and made much of by her teachers, and where she grew up large, fair, calm, just, a new woman of the new women, with better training and brains than most.

She took herself with great seriousness. Her place was in the van, and quietly and methodically she prepared

herself to fill it. She had the ailment peculiar to the newer women—the incurable race conscience, beside which the New England conscience is as a cat boil to a carbuncle.

She stood five feet eight, modeled after the severe antique beauty that only the chosen few love—a maiden stately as a palm tree, with black-lashed eyes gray as Diana's, and never a fleck to mar the wonder of her white skin, the serenity of her broad, low forehead. The one thing that kept you from feeling an awe of her was her hair. It curled naturally—or unnaturally, as you regarded Aurora—fluffed about her ears and flew about her forehead, in spite of stern efforts to discipline it, and was a most lovely, fair, and shining setting for her too-classic face. And she had a dimple. There is always hope for a woman whose hair misbehaves and who has an unexpected dimple.

Aurora came home from college to a disrupted house and a father who clung to her like a whimpering child. Lydia had once again acted in accordance with her lights, and Lydia's lights were improper and red. She had departed, leaving, as usual, shipwreck behind her. Having broken the steel-and-iron fortune of Bransome Janeway, and incidentally his heart and himself, she took herself off to the Orient. She had no liver, like her brother Jordan, whom she hated, no conscience, like her stepdaughter, whom she disliked, and no heart, like her husband, whom she despised. So her soul didn't trouble her, and her toilets were far, far above those achieved by ordinary mortals, and she was cynically adored by a princeling, who said he loved her because she was the only other human being as bad as himself.

The vampire flitted, and her departure almost consoled Aurora for the wreck she had wrought. She could better bear the absence of fortune than the presence of her stepmother. What

there was to save, Aurora saved. She took her father into smaller and perhaps pleasanter quarters. Out of their great household but one came with them—grim Mary McKinstry, who had nursed and loved and slapped Aurora as a child. The rest didn't matter. Aurora had her father to herself. The nursing of a male was in her hand, a task to which the primordial instincts in all women blindly rise.

She kept him for three holy, quiet years. He was her child, not she his. He sat in an armchair by a sunny window, and read and dozed and dreamed, and his dreams were always happy, for he had forgotten Lydia. He had forgotten almost everything. Sometimes he would ask Mary McKinstry:

"And who are you, my dear? I've seen you before, haven't I?"

"Aye, that you have. I'm Mary, Mr. Bransome—Mary McKinstry."

"Why, yes, of course! Dear, dear, how forgetful I am! I'll tell you what I think, Mary McKinstry. I think I'm growing to be an old, old man, my dear."

But he never forgot his daughter. He waited for her, with the sad patience of the old, when she was out; he greeted her with a childlike clapping of his hands when she came in. It was these years that softened cold, calm, self-sufficient Aurora, who had, perhaps, too much of the lily and not enough of the rose in her, into a pitying, sweet patience with weakness. When the beloved white head vanished from the window, in the natural sorrow that ensued, there was no tinge of bitterness. In memory of her father, Aurora founded the Bransome Janeway Chair of Social Tea Service, ready at a moment's notice for use. Many came and sat in the old man's chair. Now it was a league worker, worn out with public speaking; now an overworked, pale young cleric; now a show

girl, with a pretty, impertinent, empty face; now some of the alien women, the sad women who bear and rear and lose. They all sat in Bransome Janeway's chair, and each blessed it.

It was, then, to this Aurora Janeway that an imperious telephone message came from Jordan Courtenay, brother to Lydia of evil memory—that same Jordan Courtenay who had given no sign, offered no help, when Bransome Janeway had been wrecked by his sister.

"I wonder what will he want?" mused Mary McKinstry, who received the message in Aurora's absence. "Twould be like him, her brother as he is, to wash his hands of the hussey and strive to throw her onto ours."

And when Aurora came in, Mary gave her the message cautiously and a trifle unwillingly.

"Have no clavers with any of that breed," she impressed upon her nursing, who topped her by a full head. "I'm misdoubting the lot of them. There's a callant of that house stravaging about the town—a feckless loon, you mind, joy riding to the devil. Have no clavers with *him*, neither," said Mary jealously.

"All right, I won't," agreed Aurora drowsily, for she was very tired. With a fine red yawn, she trailed off into sleep.

She had never given a thought to the brother of her stepmother, though she had, of course, heard of him as a public-spirited citizen. She wondered how he happened to know of her existence, and what he could possibly want to see her about.

When, at the appointed hour, she saw him, he was showing the result of his break with his nephew in an increase of ill temper that made him restless and nervous. He was sick in body and mind. She who had faithfully nursed another sick man regarded him with eyes of softened judgment.

He never forgot his first view of her.

She was no more beautiful, he thought, than his wild, idle lad; but more forceful, competent, purposeful. And he hated her for it. He could respect, admire, trust her, feel safe in leaving great responsibilities in her hands, but he could not forgive her for being what Frank was not.

She was not in the least curious; she was intelligently interested—that was all. And she sat with her firm white hands resting idly in her lap, waiting for him to explain. Her repose irritated him. He stirred in his chair, and his somber eyes, fixed upon her in close scrutiny, smoldered with animosity.

"I sent for you, Miss Janeway, because I have a proposition to make you," he said after a pause. "You are not, I take it, what one might call rich, since your father's failure?"

"I am not," she said calmly, "what one might call rich—since my father's failure."

She felt slightly disdainful of the man's lack of delicacy. Didn't he remember—Lydia? He *did* remember Lydia, and smiled sardonically.

"I never had much sympathy for Janeway," he said bluntly. "He had two—or was it three?—examples of Lydia's matrimonial forays before him. He lost his head, and then, of course, his money. It was a mathematical certainty. Why, the minute I knew he had been fool enough to marry my sister, I canceled all dealings with him."

"Surely," said Aurora haughtily, "you have not so urgently demanded my presence here this morning merely to discuss my poor father's disastrous marriage with your sister?"

"No," he admitted sourly. "I sent for you on your own account. Do you know my nephew, Francis Courtenay?"

Aurora smiled slightly.

"We move in different worlds, you must remember," she reminded him.

He nodded. His thoughts were not

so much with her as with Francis—Francis, who had been such an amusing little boy only yesterday; Francis, who was such an undesirable young man to-day.

"My nephew and I have grounds of disagreement—so serious that it is impossible for us to do anything but separate," he told her, after a pause. "He has no moral character whatever!" he brought out violently. *She* had, he knew; the bishop had told him so. The bishop had waxed enthusiastic over Aurora Janeway. "He is an idler, profligate, good for nothing. And he has chosen to disobey me, to leave my house, forever. I—I am a man with a conscience. I put it to you—can a man with a conscience intrust a great fortune to the hands of a fast young flyaway, whose boon companions are other fast young flyaways and dancing women? Could I, could I?"

"If the young man is what you say he is, no," said Aurora. "But are you quite sure you haven't misjudged him?"

"Am I sure I breathe? Am I sure I'm a sane man, a decent man, a moral man? I tell you, he's no good! He has but one purpose in life—to amuse himself. His associates are vicious, lost, damned! All right, then—let him go and be damned with them! But not in my house, not with my money!"

"But what," she wondered, "have I to do with it, Mr. Courtenay?"

"What have you to do with it? Why, you're to take his place! *You're to come here and take my nephew Frank's place!*" The blood beat hammerlike in his ears when he heard himself say it aloud.

"Would you mind explaining just what you mean?" Was the poor gentleman mad? Had she better summon help?

"I am explaining myself—if you will kindly keep still," he growled, and again his eyes were hostile. "Miss Janeway, I must have somebody to help me—



somebody with a higher purpose in life than idle pleasure. I regard my fortune as a sacred trust." Here he winced, in spite of himself. "My nephew," he gulped, "thinks that all trusts should be dissolved. My nephew is a moral anarchist."

"That is true of most anarchists," she observed.

"There is no room for *any* kind of anarchists in my scheme of things!" he barked. "Now, Miss Janeway, I want somebody who will carry out my plans intelligently—somebody like you," he finished.

"Oh!" said Miss Janeway. "I see! You wish to engage me as a sort of confidential secretary? Why, thank you very much, Mr. Courtenay, but I couldn't accept your offer. It would cripple me. I could send you a reliable, intelligent person, though, who would suit you quite as well; shall I?"

"No," he snarled. "No. I want you—nobody else. I'm not offering you a secretaryship. I propose, Miss Janeway, to, in a way, adopt you. Now will you come and live in my house, carry out my orders intelligently, bring a trained morality to my aid? Yes or no?"

"You know nothing about me, really. I might disappoint you."

He took up a small slip of paper and handed it to her. It was the neatest, completest sort of a nutshell biography, detailing her varying shades of fortune, activities, surroundings, and friends.

"Permit me to inform you that I never do anything blindfolded," he remarked significantly. "Now, then, will you or won't you?"

"Am I to be allowed to exercise my own judgment, choose my own methods of procedure? Or should I be expected merely to obey orders?"

He hadn't thought of that. Her level-headedness abashed him like a dash of cold water in his heated face.

"I hardly think we would conflict,"

he decided. "You are too sensible not to enter into my plans, and I am too progressive not to understand yours."

"I couldn't think of not continuing to do my own work in my own way," she told him.

"You will come, then?" he breathed heavily. He didn't know whether he was glad or sorry, though it would have irked him unbearably, given him a sense of defeat, had she refused.

"I should be afraid to refuse," she said. "It looks providential."

He began to outline his plans.

Aurora listened. He was following the broad and beaten track. He would regild the wings of the seraphim over the main altar, and add a tablet stating that Jordan Courtenay had done it for the greater glory of God. He would pray publicly, unashamed, unabashed. But he would have the publicans and sinners come in by side doors and be railed off from the elect. And you could never, never make him understand that publicans and sinners are quite as often the work of the elect as are the begilded wings of the altar angels.

She felt a chilling doubt. How should she reconcile herself to his measure or make him understand hers? But she understood that one cannot, must not, evade personal life problems. Run away from one to-day, and it meets you like a lion in the path to-morrow.

For young Francis she had but small concern. Should a trifler, a philanderer, an idler stand in the way of progress, reform, the uplift of the many?

She rose then, and her fairness, the quiet sureness of her strength gave him, too, a momentary doubt.

"I hope you have no entanglements?" he demanded. "After we get things into working trim, there'll be no sentimental silliness to upset them?"

"Women like me seldom marry, Mr. Courtenay," said the girl seriously, and



herself believed what she said. "We are wedded to humanity," she added grandly.

"Ha!" His lip lifted. "Children of the barren more than they of the wedded wife? Well, we'll see!"

It had been decided. She was, in a week's time, to take Frank's place, carry on the work Frank had tossed aside. But they did not shake hands in parting.

All the way home, she felt like one in a dream. The roaring subway added to this sense of unreality. Faces, thousand of faces, passed her in a blur. Even when she had again emerged into the fresher air of the streets, her eyes had the stare of one who sees visions. She who had heretofore been handicapped by lack of funds had of a sudden that most potent power on earth, money, placed at her disposal. It was as if God, witnessing her struggle, had personally interposed. Involuntarily she lifted her face—and collided smartly with a young man.

Something in his darkly handsome face struck her with a haunting familiarity. Even while each murmured the conventional apology, she stared. And he, on his side, knew that it was not the ordinary sex stare of New York, but the glance of one striving to place something familiar, the glance of half recognition.

"Where on earth have I seen this man before?" wondered Aurora. "Heavens, how handsome he is! I wonder who he can be?"

"I have been bumped into by one of the immortals—on Broadway!" thought Mr. Francis Courtenay.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Aurora found a young Russian Jewess occupying the chair, and Mary McKinstry waiting on her. The girl was a leader among the garment makers, and presented the acute intel-

ligence, the gay courage, and the astonishing beauty that seem to belong to girls of that class nowhere but in America.

She greeted Miss Janeway with friendly deference, as one greets a beloved leader. A bad strike was threatening, and the two wished to avert it.

"There was a girl that'd come through a loft fire at our last meeting. I couldn't keep her from talking, you know. And when ours looked around 'em, and considered the risks—and the hours and all—they wanted to walk out right then. I managed to hold them in, but they're bitter, Miss Janeway. And the boss won't listen to a word. I came on to talk to you about it. It'll be a pretty bad fight when it does come."

They looked at each other apprehensively. They had been through pretty bad fights before, and they knew. This thing had just *got* to be held off!

At that moment the full force and value of Jordan Courtenay's offer drove home to Aurora. Surely, surely, Providence was directly interposing, lending the aid of money! And when she and the Jewess had threshed the trouble out, she sent the girl home with renewed courage. They could hold up the strike, they were sure, indefinitely.

Even as the Jewess departed came another visitor, balancing herself on Aurora's threshold like a human dragon fly. Aurora radiated power by sheer fairness and untarnished health; this smaller, more vivid creature radiated vitality by sheer flame of spirit. The tameless gypsy courage of the face was softened by the starry steadiness of the dark eyes, the sweetness of the scarlet mouth. That there was an indomitable will under the arch loveliness was knowledge that one gained later.

"*I met a peacock's feather within the leaves of the holy Koran, and said to it: 'Surely this station is above thy condition!' It replied: 'Be silent, for*

*wherever the lovely appear, they shall find no hand upraised to oppose them."*

For this visitor was Dolly Tredegar—that Dolly Tredegar whose name blazed in electrics on Broadway, whom men adored and women envied and the public worshiped whole-heartedly.

"I've been told to come to you, Miss Janeway, about one of my show girls. A personal case, you understand."

Aurora assented gravely. She felt for this iridescent human May fly an intuitive liking, just as Dolly felt for this large, fair, calm-eyed girl a quick affection, a profound respect and admiration, such as no other human being had ever aroused in her.

Dolly, too, revolutionized Calvinistic Mary McKinsty's preconceived notions of dancers. That grim-faced vestal was delighted with the gay naughtiness, the spice of mockery and malice, the impish drollery, of this fairylike creature. Aurora was beautiful and good. But this woman was beautiful and—and something else, something more human, smacking toothsomely of, say, the leaven of original sin.

Mary offered fragrant tea in Aurora's eggshell cups, and crisp little scones such as no one but a Scotch-woman can make. She watched Dolly's childish pleasure in them with deep approval.

"Aye, they're fine, just. 'Twas my own grandmother showed me how to make them. There'll be more for you, whenever you come for them, ma'am."

And the three women settled down to a conversation that wasn't so much businesslike as intimate, friendly. They parted pledged friends.

"And now," said Mary, when they were at last alone, "what would yon old chiel be wanting with you?"

Aurora told her, and the two regarded each other steadily. It seemed incredible—something that one might dream of, but that couldn't happen in real life.

"You'll go, of course," said Mary, after a long pause.

"Yes. I'd be afraid not to."

"Surely. 'Twas intended. You wouldn't dare shirk it, lass."

"It does look like that, doesn't it, Mary? And yet——" She cast a wistful glance around the homely, pleasant room.

"And that young loon that's flitted to make place for you—what o' him, child?"

"I'm afraid he really isn't worth much, Mary—a sort of dissolute dilettant. I couldn't let him stand in the way of the work."

"Aye," said Mary, understanding.

"Nothing happens by chance. There's a meaning and a reason and a law. So I *have* to see what I can make of the chance young Mr. Courtenay threw away."

"Aye, just that. But, oh, my lass, I hate to leave this haven o' ours, where we've been so happy!"

"I, too."

The girl's face clouded. She had known trouble, grief, death, in that same haven, but she had never known a divided heart. Love had not touched her, save in his guise of altruism. She had been sincere when she had told Jordan Courtenay that women like herself were wedded to humanity.

"Well, the tide's turning and the Lord's aiding. There'll be Courtenay money to help with your workmen, and your girls on strike, and your lost girls, and they poor women that's aye bringing bairns into a world where they're no wanted, and tenement children, and menfolks out o' work, and fights for the likes of them." She looked at her nursing inquiringly.

"But Mr. Courtenay has his own views, you know—not such bad views," she finished hurriedly, seeing Mary's eyebrows go up. "And I'm to have the allowance that Mr. Frank Courtenay had—an extravagantly liberal allow-

ance, Mary." She paused again, frowning slightly. "We'll live on our own wee bit of an income, Mary, just as we've always done," she decided. "I'll use the allowance in my work. That'll leave me free to follow Mr. Courtenay's directions with a whole heart."

At that Mary McKinstry began to laugh.

"Ah, well," said she, "you'll but be using the hair o' the dog to cure its bite."

But Aurora did not smile. And then Mary McKinstry said an unprecedented thing:

"Lass, I could wish you'd a few laugh wrinkles about the mouth. Aye, 'twould be fine for you to be a wee bit gayer—like her that's just left."

Aurora's face kindled.

"I'd *love* to be like that, too, Mary," she said, and Mary blushed for herself.

"Nay, you're best as you are," she said loyally. "You're that honest I've no fears for you in your dealings with himself—though I misdoubt 'twill trouble him sore," she chuckled, "before he's done with you!"

Miss Janeway's standing in the Courtenay house was not immediately understood, though the Janeway affair was recalled and Lydia's bright-red reputation hung on the clothesline of publicity. It was thought that Lydia's stepdaughter was rather a top-heavy young woman, considering; though it was admitted clever of her to use the social-service wedge to pry her way into the millionaire's confidence.

Immersed almost from the day of her arrival in the plans Mr. Jordan Courtenay feverishly piled upon her, Aurora made no slightest attempt to interfere with the ordered law of the household. The reins remained, as heretofore, in the capable, lean hands of Simmons.

Aurora was puzzled as to just how to regard Simmons. He treated her

with the most scrupulous respect; she never had to give an order twice; nay, her wishes were often anticipated. Yet, Simmons and God alone knew how, the impression was subtly conveyed to Miss Janeway that she was an interloper. Simmons hated her. He hated her even more because he was forced to like and respect her, and he couldn't forgive her for that. His silent animosity troubled her somewhat. She didn't understand it.

Mr. Courtenay had insisted that his charity should be practical, and Aurora saw to it that he got what he asked for. His charity was practical to a degree that left him gasping. When this well-balanced, trained young woman fixed her clear eyes upon him, and in her modulated voice gave him facts and figures, his head reeled; he knew there wasn't anything to do but knuckle under and do what she told him to. She never appealed to his sentiment; she tackled him through his common sense; and he who had bullied others all his life was baffled by this large, serene girl who was in herself all that he had vociferously claimed to admire. What he preached, she practiced, and it appalled him. She chucked him head over heels into the racing stream of progress, and he who had boasted himself abreast of all progressive intelligence was forced to swim for his life. He came in contact with raw phases of life; his pretty, sugar-coated philanthropic pill was rubbed bare to the bitter heart, and he found it nauseous to the palate. More yet, the howls of the under dog gave him earache, and he was secretly resentful, as if Aurora had purposely stepped on the under dog's tail for his benefit.

And he couldn't quarrel with her. He couldn't find any fault with her. She hadn't any fault visible to the naked eye. One doesn't jaw a goddess! All he could do was to swear at Simmons, who bore it with baleful suavity, scent-

ing the cause. It filled Simmons with fiendish joy to see Jordan Courtenay taken at his word and forced to be what he had posed as being.

But while the head of the house gnawed the fist of impatience, Aurora was calmly, coolly, impersonally happy. She had a perfect digestion and work that she loved. Importunate pleaders learned to dread that unruffled presence, so terribly clear-headed and farsighted. And presently began the inevitable murmurs, swelling into clamors.

Mr. Jordan Courtenay's hair rose on his head when his works did follow him and, instead of dutiful praises, he got virulent blame. So long as he had moved along the line of least resistance, the planned, mapped-out, methodical endowing of this or that standard assimulator of shekels, he had been a desirable citizen, a beacon light, a benefactor. But now! Aurora was used to it, and unmoved, but he wasn't.

And he couldn't remonstrate. Shall one remonstrate with abstract justice? All he could do was swear at Simmons!

## CHAPTER V.

Two days after his momentous interview with his uncle, Mr. Francis Courtenay showed up in Simmons' little sanctum so unruffled, so evidently at ease, that he presented a distressing contrast to Simmons, gray-faced and suffering. For the first time in Frank's recollection, Simmons betrayed human emotion. The poor little man had a nightmare on his hands—Francis, Francis the adored, the wonderful, the clever, the handsome, was going, and a stranger was coming to take his place!

"You look green around the gills, Sims," the young man reproved him.

"Oh, Mr. Francis, Mr. Francis, indeed, sir, it's very hard on me!" wailed Simmons. "Why were you so foolish, Mr. Francis, as to cross him when he

was in such a devil's humor? You don't realize what you've done! You're so used to having money that you don't understand what not having it means!"

"Well, I'm in a fair way to find out," said Mr. Francis cheerfully. "I'm sorry, Simmons, to see you so distressed. You've supplied about all the real affection I've ever had, haven't you? Have enough left not to blame me for getting out of the gilded cage, old boy, and trying my little wings in the open."

"You and your wings!" lamented Simmons. "And the sky full of hawks!" He wrung his hands, and two tears trickled down his cheeks. "What am I to do?" he moaned.

"You're to get my stuff in shape for me, Simmons. And remember—I'm no longer Lady Clare. I'm one of the grand army of the unemployed, seeking board, lodging, and a job. Gee, but I'm looking up, aren't I? What d'ye think of that for ambition?"

"I think both of you should be shut up in asylums!" cried the goaded Simmons. "And I wish to God I had the shutting up to do! He's crazier even than you, Mr. Francis. Do you understand that he's already arranged to have your Aunt Lydia's stepdaughter come here to live? Now you see what you've brought on yourself!"

"I? Oh, get out! My uncle's brought her on himself, and if she's anything like her engaging stepmamma, she'll make things hum! Aunt Lydia's girl, eh? What a lark!" and he whistled.

"Ah, Mr. Francis," said Simmons mournfully, "was that dancing young person worth all this?"

"Oh, no, my good old Sims! No dancing young person, or any other young person, is worth all this! But one is worth more than one's uncle's money can buy one for. Understand?"

"I understand you're flying in the face of Providence."

"If Providence can stand it, I dare say I can. I've no manner of doubt Providence and I shall rub along very nicely together."

He seemed so contented, so altogether joyous, that a suspicion arose in Simmons' mind. He said abruptly:

"Mr. Francis, forgive me if I ask you, sir, but do you think she is going to marry you *now*?"

"Who's *she*?" wondered Frank, arching his eyebrows.

"You know good and well who I mean, Mr. Francis—that Miss Dolly Tredegar."

"She hasn't asked me yet," admitted Mr. Francis modestly. "Not a word has passed her lips. What should you say to that, Sims?"

"I wasn't ever asked by any, and I never expect to be—nor yet no gentleman should," snapped Simmons. Persiflage in the teeth of calamity appalled him.

"What do you know about the young lady who's coming here? Did you see her? Is she pretty?" asked Francis.

"I know very little about her, and I'd be willing to know less," growled Simmons. "I did not see her yesterday, for your uncle turned me out of his room before she came. I did see her once, before Miss Lydia left Mr. Janeway. She was a little girl then, home from boarding school, and a more solemn-faced young one I never saw. She'd pigtailed the size of your arm, and the sort of eyes that stare you out of countenance, and distressing legs, sir—*very* distressing. A most unattractive young woman she'd turn out, I should think. She's one of these uplifting women, Mr. Francis. The bishop has often spoken of her to your uncle, very admiringly. A mind as good as a man's, she has, and a very fine moral character, he says. Now you know all I know of her."

Mr. Francis puckered his mouth, narrowed his black eyes, and shud-

dered. He had seen other ladies whom the bishop praised and his uncle admired.

"Poor thing!" said he commiseratingly. "Spectacles; number-eight shoes with flat heels; no waist; travelogues at the movies by way of carnal amusement; reads stuff with something ology or itis at the tail end of the titles, and attends committee meetings; bad complexion; good intentions; and has convictions. You've got to when the bishop says you've a fine moral character. The law of affinity draws her to my uncle. *He* has a fine moral character, too! Thank God, I'm flitting! When is she due, Sims?"

"Next week. Unless," hoped Simmons, "you could see your way to change your mind, Mr. Francis?"

"I'm not to be permitted to change my mind. I'm not to *have* any mind! That's why I'm moving out and Miss Janeway's moving in. Whew! The old boy hits right hot off the bat, doesn't he?" And he grinned at the gloomy Simmons. "You'll be looking up, Simmy, old boy! Meeting of the Society to Procure Forks for Fijians in the dining room; class for the Improvement of Bishops' Bazoos in the library; Reformed Burglars, with readings from Browning, in the cellar; and you, Simmons, on hand to open the Apollinaris with prayer! In the meantime, overhaul my things and select me a neat and modest outfit, suitable to my reduced circumstances. And do you happen to know where a decayed gentleman may secure a neat, airy attic? *Not* in Washington Square. I am not yet capable of attacking in Washington Square!"

"I know an old man that's got an old house, both of them most respectable and clean. It was considered very fine once, but it's not fashionable any more—"

"I was considered very fine once, but I'm not fashionable any more, either.

Give me the address, Simmons. That old house is waiting for me. That old man shall be my landlord."

The house to which Simmons directed him was four-storied, of faded red brick, on a quiet side street. Francis liked it at sight. He liked the large, old-fashioned room shown him, and the quiet old landlord, whose respectability almost rivaled Simmons'. In the basement was a fairly good café, which promised to be convenient.

The house harbored such diverse folks as rooming houses in New York are apt to do. Across the hall roomed a pleasant young woman who typed manuscripts, a school-teacher, and the prettiest of pretty art students, studying at Cooper Union. Next to Frank's was the bare room of a theological student; and on the third floor, a young engineer and his wife had rooms, from which came the healthy yells of a yearling. Nobody in the house seemed to mind the yells, but everybody appeared willing to mind the baby.

His new neighbors amused and interested Frank. He learned that the pretty girl was Miss Winny Davis Culpepper, from Alabama. It appeared that every so often she received a box from home, on which pleasant occasions she would appear at neighboring room doors with a doily-covered plate.

"Heah's somethin' for you," she would call, starry-eyed with the joy of giving. "My mothah made it, an' it tastes like home!"

And it did. Frank decided that it tasted more like home than anything he had yet eaten. He liked Miss Winny Davis Culpepper at sight, and, like the rest of the roomers, he watched with smiling interest the progress of the understanding between herself and the young man who was going to be a minister.

It wasn't until the engineer's wife was down with influenza, and the people in the house were taking turns mind-

ing the baby and looking after his parents, that Frank really came to know Henry Harkness. He didn't dream, as he watched the tall, ungainly young man squatting on the floor entertaining the small tyrant, that one of the great, deep influences of his life was before him. He merely wondered how a grown-up could know so well just what would please a baby.

"Oh, we had ten in our family," the student explained pleasantly. "I had to help raise 'em. I know babies from the bottom up. Here—you roll him this ball, while I heat his milk. It's his feeding time."

The whilom heir to the Courtenay millions squatted on the floor and rolled a ball.

"What do you do when he wants to lick your boots?" he wondered.

"Oh, just shoo him off!" laughed the other. He turned and stood regarding the newcomer critically. "Yes, you have the knack of it. You're the natural-born baby minder. You're the domestic man."

"You lose," said Frank. "I never handled a kid before. This is the closest I've ever come to one. And I'm not the domestic man. I"—he stared at Harkness—"am the he-butterfly!"

Harkness laughed.

"Kneel up," he ordered, "and hold out your arms. Don't say a word to the baby. Just look at him."

The he-butterfly knelt up and held out his arms. The baby returned his look with the long, unwinking, heaven-pure stare of babyhood, puckered his rose of a mouth into a smile, scrambled forward on hands and knees, and, hoisting himself upward by gripping Mr. Courtenay's knees, stood swaying on his untried feet in the circle of the young man's arms. With great deliberateness and thoroughness, he investigated every nook and cranny of his new friend's countenance, using a fat finger as a search warrant. Finding him al-



together to his liking, the little fellow gurgled and leaned his rose leaf of a cheek against Frank's.

Conscious of a distinctly new sensation, Frank intuitively put out an arm that cradled the fat, roly-poly body. He had never touched anything so soft, so warm, so young. The divinity student laughed softly.

"Shucks! I knew it the minute I clapped eyes on you!" said he good-humoredly. "And so did he," he added, nodding at the baby. "I'll take the kiddy's word for you. I think we're going to be real good friends."

"Is that logical or theological?" wondered Frank.

"It's nature," said the divinity student, and he picked up the baby and fed him as deftly as his own mother might.

This was a gaunt enough young man, battling his way through college, older than most students, wearing patched shoes and shirts and with the bur of North Dakota in his speech. Not three weeks since, and he would have been regarded by young Mr. Francis Courtenay, had they chanced to meet, with the uplifted eyebrow of amused scorn. The mere fact that he was going to be a minister would have held Frank aloof, for he had thought that such a man must be either a fool to believe or a knave for pretending to believe.

Yet, as he looked into the brown face of the Dakotan, he knew that this man was honesty incarnate, and that nobody but a fool would have thought him one. Already Mr. Courtenay's new freedom was bringing him face to face with realities. He knew a man when he met him.

When he gripped the Dakotan's big paw, he realized, soberly, that he had made his first friend. And Harkness, looking at the dark, expressive face, the slight, elegant figure, the fine hands, noting the grace of speech and manner, gave Frank the love that only a great-

hearted man can give another more fortunate than he.

"I've got a lodging and a friend," Frank decided. "The next thing is a job, and I know where my job is waiting for me. I shall go and force Colin Murray to give me the one he offered me when he thought I didn't need it."

## CHAPTER VI.

Colin Murray had done what young men often do—married, for her household prettiness, what he had considered the dearest girl. God knows she had been dear enough! So dear, indeed, that it strained Murray's resources, then his patience, and finally his affection and respect, to meet her demands. It seems incredible that a butterfly should have such insatiate demands, but a butterfly is a very expensive possession, and comes high. Perhaps that is why so many otherwise sane American men think they must have one.

Mrs. Murray explained firmly that what he termed extravagances were necessities, owed to their position. Murray, however, discovered that *he* owed pretty nearly everybody who would credit them. Life was highly unpleasant to him when he was being dunned by the grocer, for it spoiled his meals, or by the dressmaker, for it made him look upon his wife's exquisite toilets with a jaundiced eye.

Butterflies have a horror of little grubs. Murray's wife didn't give him a baby. She bought a Pomeranian and hired an extra maid to wash it in the servants' bathtub. Murray refrained from kicking the loathly little beast that satisfied his wife's maternal instincts, but, being a red-blooded man, he thought thoughts and buckled more grimly down to work, like the mule to which he was insidiously likened. Too often bad good women make good bad women pay a heavy price for their sins



of omission, but in this case, the man had a diviner mistress—his work. He was one of America's few great architects. In his boyhood, he whose name is anathema to the unco guid, but whose hand of a master workman nevertheless beckoned the feet of young men into the paths of pure truth in art, had kindled in Murray's eager soul an unquenchable flame. Wherefore, Murray wrought faithfully for his gods. A lonely man, a childless man, whenever he saw in a younger worker some seeds of promise, he yearned over that one fatherly, and held aloft the lighted lamp. But if that young man played traitor and went astray, Murray cursed him with many and fearsome curses and cast him into outer darkness.

Upon a time it fell that Murray and young Francis Courtenay had forgathered for a week-end at a brand-new bungalow. It was a fearfully and wonderfully made bungalow, the price and furnishings of which were bad enough to merit fulsome featurings in Sunday supplements.

"It looks like a rubber plant," Frank murmured into the architect's ear. "And somehow I never thought a rubber plant was refined, did you?"

Murray smiled like a hyena. His wife had liked the house and was rabidly envious of its mistress. She had complained only last night that *she* could never hope to have a house like that, and Murray had told her, snarlingly, that she couldn't.

A little later, in the bloated library, Francis drew some heavy white paper toward him and began to sketch what Murray, watching listlessly, saw was a house plan. Of a sudden the architect leaned forward. The plan wasn't stereotyped; it had unusual features, originality, design. It wasn't amateurish, either.

Murray took the thing up and studied it critically. There were faults which the boy himself would discover and cor-

rect. The thing wasn't valuable for what it was, but for what it promised. For there was that touch to it which the trained eye of the master craftsman saw and recognized.

"You could do good work—if you were worth your salt," said Murray, with a touch of deep bitterness. *He* had had to fight his way inch by inch, with a wife who was a millstone around his neck. And this careless idler had the Gleam—and played with it!

Francis looked up with his enigmatic smile.

"Oh, everybody has some little gift—even triflers like me," he said carelessly. "I happen to like this sort of thing; and I've taken a course or two."

"In my profession," said Murray morosely, "there are many asses who pass for horses. It therefore goes a little against the grain to find a horse who is content to bray."

"Thanks," said Francis gently. "But you're not remembering that my fodder, so to speak, is found. And when I bray loudest, I'm praised for my exquisite neighing!"

Murray blew spirals of cigarette smoke through his nose, and when he spoke, it was with narrowed eyes.

"It's quite possible that if your stable were burned over your head, and you were turned over to a decent trainer, you might come in under the wires a winner."

"You do me proud," said the heir to Jordan Courtenay's millions, laughing. "But go 'way, beguiler, go 'way! I don't belong to horseflesh! I'm a stalled ox, with content, and the dinner of herbs doesn't tempt me. However, if ever I am kicked out of content, I'll come and beg you for a job."

"Stranger things have happened," said the architect. "If the time comes, ask me for a job, and I'll halter break you."

It was to this same Murray that Mr. Francis Courtenay presented himself,

toward eleven of the clock on a fine morning. Murray had liked him more than most. His clean zest, his joyousness, his odd twist of seriousness where none had been expected, intrigued the architect. He looked up as Frank entered his office, and smiled involuntarily.

"I'm busy," he said, "disgustingly busy. Nevertheless, O gilded ornament of the idle rich, I'm pleased to see you. What do you want?"

Francis draped himself around the most comfortable chair. He was so ornamental that Murray's tired eyes brightened.

"You are," he mused aloud, "so highly decorative that if it were not for your clothes, I could use you on a cornice, or make you part of a frieze. Trousers, Frank, are the curse of modern art. They explain why we have to crib from the barelegged ancients. We can't have slim young joyous gods in breeches! Ever study the effect of bronze breeches on a Hall of Fame hero, Frank?"

"No," admitted Frank. "But," he offered shamelessly, "if you think I'd be a slim young joyous god in the buff, I'm at your service."

"You have decent instincts," said Murray gratefully. "I hope to make an Olympian of you yet. It's high time," he added, "that somebody should make something of you!"

"You're getting warm!" said Frank. "You remind me of my uncle. My uncle proposes to make a beggar of me. I'd rather be an architect, Murray. So I've come for that job."

"I'm too busy to play with you this morning," said Murray. "Come after office hours and blither, but run away now, like a dear child, and play with some other little plutocratic pets like yourself. Don't come kidding a poor workingman like me. It's not fair."

"When you want to hide the truth, tell it openly, and your best friends will say you're a liar," commented Frank.

"My dear man, I stand too much in awe of you this morning to kid you. I behold in you my potential boss. You told me, on a time, I'd a bit of the real stuff in one spot. Now, if you weren't lying, play up. Murray, I want you to take me into your office."

At that Murray's eyes snapped. He swung around in his chair.

"I did tell you that. But, my dear fellow—I don't play when I work, and you've never done anything but play. I couldn't afford to waste time on you. In my job, you dig and sweat and keep on digging and sweating."

"I want to dig and sweat."

"You? Why, you frescoed sybarite!" laughed Murray.

"My uncle says I'm a dashed he-butterfly."

"Some naturalist, your uncle! Some naturalist!"

"Oh, he doesn't give a rap whether I'm one or not. It's because I sip flowers of my own choosing, and he thinks they're weeds, and he wants me to hover around weeds of his raising—and he insists they're flowers."

Murray made marks on a pad of blotting paper with the point of his pencil. He remembered that Jordan Courtenay and young Francis had locked horns before. That was town gossip.

"It came to a head about Dolly Tredegar," admitted Frank. "We did have a pretty bad smash-up with the car, and he had to pay, of course. But he's got notions about Dolly. Out of Proverbs, you know. And I'm to cut her dead for my soul's sake. I'm to have my soul saved by my uncle, and my mind trained by Burleigh-Smith. How'd you like to have your mind trained by a crook like Burleigh-Smith, Murray? So we agreed to disagree, and he told me to get out."

"Chucked you? For fair?" Murray was honestly astonished.

"Well, he gave me my choice, and

I chose to get out. Now do I get that job?"

Murray got up.

"On your faith and honor," said he, "if I take you in and lick you into shape, you won't go back to the flesh-pots? So many go back to the flesh-pots, son! Will you stick to me and work until I turn you inside out and back again?"

"I don't like your metaphor," said Francis. "But I will stick to you and work. When do I start in?"

"Now," said Murray grimly. "And here!" And he led the young man to an inner, barer, less attractive office, and introduced him to a deal table.

"Courtenay," said the big architect, "there's more room in this country for the real thing, in all lines, than in any other country on earth. This is the coming kingdom, the nation in process of becoming beautiful. I tell you, Art is engaged to be married to Life, in the United States of America! And," he finished, with a kindling face, "praise your gods, my son, that you're going to be one of the ushers at the wedding!"

Which is how Mr. Francis Courtenay came by his job.

## CHAPTER VII.

Miss Dolly Tredegar, in a scarlet frock that made her resemble a tanager, sat with her hands clasped around her knees in a wicker chair whose upholstery was mostly green. She was entertaining and being entertained by Mr. Frank Courtenay, for the first time since his break with fortune. And he had brought with him, by one of those whimsies that set Frank apart from other folks, a lean, lank man who called Dolly "marm" and stared at her with naïve curiosity. Dolly had at first suspected Frank of bringing in this oddity as the cat brings things into the house. And then it was borne in upon her

that, far from this being the case, Frank had brought Harkness, not to amuse, but to do her an honor!

Dolly did not know the part she herself had played in Frank's downfall, for the simple reason that he hadn't told her. She only knew that the differences between uncle and nephew were irreconcilable, and that Jordan Courtenay had chosen his sister's stepdaughter to carry on his plans.

"Frank," she said, with deep conviction, "she's wonderful! If there's any sham about him, any dross in his soul, she'll burn it out, with sheer truthfulness and efficiency! If any other woman were as truthful and efficient as she is, I should detest her. But one doesn't detest Miss Janeway."

Frank looked up with a smile.

"It's easy to admire a woman that you don't have to be jealous of," he told her. "I dare say you'd be called a grand woman, by other women, if you were somewhat the size and shape of the Statue of Liberty and severely plain in the face."

Dolly's expressive eyes widened with astonishment.

"Is it possible that you don't admire her?"

"The bishop says she has a fine moral character. Of course I admire her. One has to admire people with fine moral characters."

"Did you ever see her, Frank?"

"Lord forbid! Simmons met her once. He told me about it."

"Simmons doesn't like her?"

"Well, Simmy is a bit prejudiced. But he admires her fine moral character, of course. He phoned me that, although my uncle has taken to using unusually bad language of late, it isn't the young lady's fault. She has a conscience. She isn't after his money any more than I'd be myself. She takes it for what she can make it do."

"Well, isn't that what Mr. Jordan Courtenay wanted?"

"It's what he thought he wanted," said Frank.

"I wish you knew Miss Janeway."

"Oh, have a heart!" he implored. "I don't like the type. No, dear lady. Let her remain as far from me as the East is from the West! Simmons says she's that good she makes him wishful to be bad. Now if a woman can make old Simmy wishful to be bad, and by sheer power of virtue induce my uncle to learn new oaths, what effect would she have upon *me*?"

"Your uncle is a horrid old man!"

"It's his liver."

"And Simmons is another. I don't think I care much for old men, Frank. When they're good, they're horrid, and when they're bad, they're worse. There ought to be some method of disposing of men who are too young to die and too old to be agreeable."

"Gray hair," said Harkness, speaking for the first time, "is a crown of glory."

"But most old men are bald," Dolly reminded him gracelessly. And the three laughed.

They had tea then, and very expensive little cakes, which the two young men devoured with relish.

"We don't get anything like these often," sighed the theological student. "Only when Winny Davis gets a box from home and shares with us. You'll know how fine yours are, ma'am"—he pronounced it "marm"—"when I tell you they're as fine as the ones Winny Davis gets from Alabama!"

"Oh! And is Winny Davis as pretty as her goodies are nice?"

"Oh, prettier! She's studying art at Cooper Union, and she's prettier than anything she'll ever paint. And James Henry here—" Frank waved his slim hand at his friend.

"But not until I finish my studies and am ordained and receive a call," said the Dakotan seriously. "But Jacob served seven years, and they seemed to

him but one day, for the love he had for Rachel." He looked at the dainty, exquisitely gowned woman shyly. "You and Winny Davis look something alike, ma'am—like sisters of one father, but by different mothers." And his eyes honored Dolly for that she resembled the girl who studied art at Cooper Union.

The maid came in with a card. Miss Tredegear glanced at it, started, murmured instructions, and then, with a malicious smile, turned to her callers.

"A friend of mine I'd like you to meet," she said graciously.

Entered a gloriously tall and fair young woman, whose mass of light hair was worn as severely as it is possible to subdue rebellious hair, and who had the serene beauty of an antique statue copied in warm, red-and-white flesh and blood. Beside her small, dark Dolly was like a lovely hummingbird, and every other woman Frank had ever seen faded and paled. He knew her at once—the girl whom he had bumped into on the street, the girl whom he had recognized as divinity in the flesh.

Tall woman and taller man, gray eyes clung to brown eyes. She, too, recognized him, with a great leap of the heart. She had never forgotten him. It was a face one could not easily forget; never had any other so stirred her.

"Miss Janeway," said Dolly Tredegear demurely, "permit me to introduce to you my friend, Mr. Frank Courtenay. Mr. Courtenay, I have the honor of making known to you Miss Aurora Janeway."

An inner voice, a braying voice, pealed through Mr. Courtenay's consciousness:

"Spectacles; number-eight shoes with flat heels; bad complexion; good convictions. Bishop says she has a fine moral character."

And this—*this* was Aurora Janeway! He longed to get down on his knees

and grovel before her in abjectest apology. The flush of shame came to his cheek.

Aurora's feeling was one of blank, stark astonishment. And she remembered somebody speaking—her own self, Heaven forgive her!

"I'm afraid he isn't worth much, Mary—a sort of dissolute dilettant. I couldn't let him stand in the way of the work."

She, too, flushed. Her crystal-clear honesty reproached her. She had done this enchanting young man a cruel injustice. She should have known more about him before she judged him. Yet the stories she had heard of his recklessness, his spendthrift extravagance, his arrogant profligacy, had seemed so well authenticated! Even if they were all true— Well, this was Frank Courtenay!

She was no fool, and she had no sentimental silliness. She had seen too many men, known too much, to be easily deceived. Her trained intelligence assured her that this was a good man's face. Whimsical, haughty, careless, mocking he might be at times, as clouds pass over deep waters, but never, never evil.

She recognized the haunting familiarity—he resembled Jordan Courtenay. Aurora had no illusions about Jordan Courtenay. She knew him, already, to the bone. And she knew now that his nephew had been rashly, unjustly pushed aside.

Dolly, after her impish wont, was amused. Harkness looked on, only partly comprehending. But the other two realized that for them the most momentous event of life was occurring—they had met each other! The woman was more direct, less humorous, and also less complex, than the man. She moved directly toward her destiny with the force of a natural law. She was the one-man woman, and this

was the man. And he was Frank Courtenay!

The man had played with the bright shadow of love, as all men do. He was capable of loving half a dozen women at a time, but up to the present he had never been able to love *one*. Now the one had come, and she was Aurora Janeway!

Frank heard the Dakotan's voice, heard Dolly's; then the wonder woman spoke, and he quivered. Never had any other woman a voice so vibrant, so bell-like!

The cause of Miss Janeway's unexpected call was simple. She wished Dolly's help for two chorus girls. Also, she needed her counsel for certain plans that she hoped to see carried through, plans that they had tentatively discussed at their first meeting. Should she call again, or would Miss Tredegear herself call, some forenoon?

Dolly, with puckered scarlet lips, considered. She had a sense of irony akin to Frank's. It intrigued her daring fancy, captivated her mischievous spirit, to visit the Courtenay house as a sister of charity, a forwarder of godliness. She said, pleasantly, that she thought she would call, during a forenoon to be chosen later. She would come direct from a rehearsal of her new play.

"You have a new dance?"

"The best ever!" cried Dolly. "I shall put the town in my pocket! You just watch!"

"Why not let it continue to lie at your feet?" asked Frank.

Harkness looked thoughtful. This was the first theatrical light that had ever shone upon him. It was a beautiful light, a dazzling light, but it was undeniably a footlight, and do footlights shine upon the good? He wasn't altogether sure. Lovely as the lady was, he felt more at ease with Miss Janeway. He could breathe with healthier lungs in Aurora's atmosphere than in Dolly's.

Aurora drank the tea that Dolly pressed upon her, and ate the expensive little cakes, thinking that she preferred Mary McKinstry's simpler scones. Then she took her leave, and was whirled away in the Courtenay car to the Courtenay house, while Mr. Frank Courtenay was left to trudge afoot to his rooming house, or at best to take to the subway.

"Do you know," said Dolly, cruelly enjoying the young man's discomfiture, "do you know, Frank, I don't consider Simmons a good judge! I think Miss Janeway quite splendid, if you ask me!"

"I've seen her before," said Harkness. "She's rather like a lady archangel, isn't she? If Gabriel had a twin sister, she'd be the image of Miss Janeway."

"I feel sacrilegious," admitted Frank. "And Simmons is an old ass! I shall always be grateful to you for enabling me to meet her, Dolly."

"Your uncle had been an invalid for some years, hadn't he?" Dolly was pursuing her own thoughts.

"He thought so."

"He's changing his mind," said Dolly, laughing. "Miss Janeway changed his doctors. She was convinced that most of his ills were imaginary—and Miss Janeway lives up to her convictions. My dressing woman has a friend who's a maid in Mr. Jordan Courtenay's house, and the gossip reached me. That's how one hears things. I hear he throws things at people's heads, Frank! Well, I shall keep out of his way. I can't afford to have things thrown at mine!"

Frank and Harkness walked home, both silent. The little dancer was so new an experience to Harkness that he had to think her over seriously. And Frank had Aurora Janeway to think about—for the simple reason that he had fallen in love with her, hopelessly, irrevocably.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Doctor Forbes, worldly and easy-going, had coddled Mr. Jordan Courtenay. He had known many wealthy men live long and happy lives as quasi-invalids and die at a ripe old age in the odor of sanctity and camphor. If this one chose to follow the liver line, and could well afford to pay for the privilege, why cross him?

But the younger men that Miss Aurora Janeway called in were of a newer and sterner school, and they used different tactics. They treated his liver as if it had been a bricklayer's; they took away his many expensive medicines; they made him get up early, and wouldn't let him sit all day in his own room. The bishop once heard Mr. Courtenay commenting upon his new physicians, and went away wondering whether it is better for a man to gain the world and lose his soul.

Having put his hand to the plow, there was nothing for the exasperated gentleman to do but follow it to the bitter end of the furrow. He lost his privileges; he had been told, bluntly, that there really wasn't anything at all the matter with him, except an ingrowing imagination! They trotted him, sweated him, dieted him. And once a day they made him go out in his fine new limousine, wherein he sat enthroned, a gold-headed stick between his knees, and glowered upon the universe, a most unhappy man.

He was in a hideous quandary. He had quarreled with Frank for not being good enough, and he dared not quarrel with Aurora for being too good. Yet he could endure the absence of Frank, whom he loved and did not respect, better than the presence of Aurora, whom he respected and did not love.

Worse yet, this new treatment was undoubtedly setting him up. Aurora Janeway had gauged his health as exactly as she had gauged his philan-



thropy, and was placing both upon a sound basis. He was an improved man, and he didn't like it.

He would sit brooding by the hour. Suppose he told this terrible, logical young woman that he had had just about enough of this higher life? He had a vision of himself trying to be unreasonable with incarnate reason, and shuddered. Alas, one doesn't row with Pallas Athena!

"Oh, damn! Damn!" said the godly Mr. Courtenay.

To-day, returning from a drive, during which he had been gloomily resigning himself to his fate, he found another car at his door, and from it the prettiest woman he had ever seen alighted. There was about her an air so gay, so free, so joyous, so exhilarating, that the cross-grained man felt his ill humor vanish. He caught one glimpse of her profile—the features of an exquisite purity of outline, the dark skin of so fine and pure a texture that the blue veins showed through, the lips of a darker red, and more velvety, than any other lips he had ever seen.

Plainly, this was no ordinary person! Mr. Courtenay's heart misbehaved.

He was devoured with an instant curiosity as to who she could be. He wished to see her, to speak to her. It had been more years than he liked to think since a woman had so stirred him.

At this instant, a third car drove up, and the bishop hailed him. The ecclesiastic had a genuine liking for the crusty millionaire, who led so strict and stern a life, but he knew him to be of a domineering mind and a hasty temper, and he had been wondering whether it was really wise to disinherit Frank, despite that young man's godlessness. Frank had always aroused a curious feeling in the bishop. Perhaps it was envy.

He more than respected Aurora Jane-way. An easy-going Christian himself, he was just a little in awe of a young

woman as uncompromising as an archangel. And he was beginning to understand the effect she produced upon Mr. Courtenay. The bishop felt ashamed of himself for secretly sympathizing with his old friend, but he couldn't help it. Archangels are none too easy to live with.

Mr. Courtenay, instead of going directly to his own rooms, as was his wont, ushered his friend into the drawing-room. He had a secret hope that he might discover something of that radiant visitor.

His hope was realized. She was seated in the drawing-room, studying the inane perfections of the Courtenay ladies and the arrogance of the Courtenay men, staring down from the walls. The visitor's own immediate forbears had been a Welsh miner and the daughter of a Hungarian fiddler.

As the two gentlemen entered, she turned upon them a pair of great dark eyes that were velvet pansies for softness and stars for splendor, and her mouth was a dark-red rose for sweetness, and her hair so black that purple lights were upon it; and into the mind of one of these men, who read his Bible daily, came broken words:

*"Behold, thou art fair. Thou hast dove's eyes within thy locks. Thy lips are as a thread of scarlet. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister. Thou hast ravished my heart with thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck."*

Dolly saw a tall man, strikingly handsome, despite the fact that his face was marred with ill temper. His hair, of a cottony whiteness and thickness, contrasted startlingly with his heavy black eyebrows and large dark eyes. A short military mustache shaded a well-shaped, but hard mouth. Strong, domineering, overbearing, arrogant, the face was yet too like young Frank's to be anything but innately noble.

The two appraised each other—the woman whom the man had said was



damned, and the man whom the woman had considered damnable. Neither paid the slightest attention to the worthy bishop beaming in the background.

Dolly smiled. And of a sudden Mr. Jordan Courtenay was glad from the bottom of his heart that he wasn't upstairs in his cushioned chair. He was glad he was a man, and alive, that his health was improving, that Aurora Janeway had forced him out of his orbit, to meet the smile of this woman's most beautiful mouth. He was so delighted with Dolly's smile that he gave her one in return, and your bad-tempered person has the sweetest smile on earth. It so changed his aspect, so transfigured him, that Dolly saw in an instant that he was really far handsomer than Frank.

He introduced the bishop, who was also delighted with Dolly, and then he introduced himself—and waited. But Dolly merely murmured that she had an appointment with Miss Janeway, who was, however, detained upstairs. She was waiting until Miss Janeway should be at liberty.

The little hussy was enjoying herself as only a nature with a spice of the cat in it can. She rather regretted that Frank's uncle wasn't more like what she had imagined him to be. Then the situation would have been quite ideal.

Mr. Courtenay, hoping Christianly that paralysis might descend upon the case upstairs and keep Miss Janeway waiting upon it indefinitely, seated himself and remarked that to-day was a particularly fine day. The sunshine was unusually sunshiny, the sky enchantingly skyey, the air exhilaratingly airy.

The bishop said, blandly, that it looked just like any other fine day to him, but that Mr. Courtenay probably enjoyed it because he'd been shut indoors long enough to be keen about out-of-doors.

"You have been an invalid?" Dolly

looked at Mr. Courtenay with flattering interest.

Mr. Courtenay was modest about his invalidism. He'd rather she thought him *strong*. What a sympathetic voice, what woman-angel eyes! Give him sympathy and insight rather than reason and logic!

The bishop wondered where he had seen that astonishingly pretty face before. Perhaps he had met her at some country house? Or at one of the legations, when he had visited the capital? Evidently she was a personage. But he couldn't place her. He was annoyed with himself.

Mr. Courtenay pursued the same object by a different route. He asked, with interest:

"You're on one of Miss Janeway's committees?"

Henceforth, he determined, he would keep in closer touch with the personnel of Miss Janeway's committees.

She regretted, demurely, that her time was too limited for such activities, which convinced the bishop that this was really Somebody. But who?

Mr. Courtenay found himself wondering, with a ghastly surmise, if she were not married and the mistress of some great establishment, a woman taken up with large social activities. The idea was so distinctly distasteful that it shocked him. Somehow her appearance did not suggest such misplaced matrimony. But one can never tell.

The bishop's conversation ambled amiably around such topics as polite society discusses. He named names, casually. Dolly knew many of the men; many of the men were mad to know Dolly. She knew none of the women, but she didn't tell that to the bishop. She had the supreme art of listening interestedly, and a man gauges a woman's intelligence by her interest in his conversation. She understood exactly how to make men talk so that they

pleased themselves and appeared to please her. This is super-genius.

The bishop and Mr. Courtenay were surprised at their own cleverness. The bishop told a mild joke, at which Dolly laughed like a chime of vesper bells. Mr. Courtenay wasn't to be outdone, and the enchantress cast upon *him* a glance that made his heart turn somersaults.

And still, by the mercy of Providence, was Aurora detained! Still that vinegar-faced vestal, Mary McKinstry, had not reappeared, to call the lovely lady away in her voice that was like a mattock scraping clay off the face of a rock. It occurred to Mr. Courtenay that he might interest, please, and even detain his visitor if he could lure her into the conservatory that was the one worldly pride of his life. Behold her, then, escorted thither by an eager Mr. Courtenay and an amiable bishop.

Dolly gave a cry of real pleasure. The place was a marvel of bloom and scent and color. Some of the blossoms were of particular rarity and beauty, and these the owner cut recklessly while the man at work there looked on aghast. He had seen blooms cut for hospitals, for bazaars, but never before had they been snipped wholesale for a chance visitor. Mutely he looked at the bishop, but the bishop's eyes were upon the young lady.

"You really should wear one in your hair—over the right ear," the bishop was saying critically. "Black hair and bright blossoms belong to each other as by divine law. I learned that in Spain, when I was young." Something not at all ecclesiastical peeped out of his mild eyes for a fleeting second, and was gone.

Having stripped his plants for her, Mr. Courtenay led the seducer back to the drawing-room, the bishop booming behind like an amiable bumblebee. The three were in friendly conversation when Mary McKinstry reappeared on the scene. Miss Janeway, she ex-

plained, hadn't quite finished with her visitors upstairs, and begged the young lady's patience for a few minutes longer.

"Two rampaging union women, they are, and standing out for a strike immediately, and she's against it, showing why and how and where they'll come to grief, the daft creatures! And she can't let them go till she has their word they'll stand still a bit and wait. She's wonderful, just!"

"Ah, she is! Indeed, indeed she is!" Dolly kindled, and looked up to see Frank's uncle with a twisted lip and a cold, hard eye and a black frown that changed him from a pleasant gentleman into something like the ogre she had imagined him to be.

A few minutes later, Aurora herself appeared, calm and serene and very, very lovely. Her hair was unusually obstreperous, and she put up a strong white hand to push it back. Her manner to Jordan Courtenay and the bishop was kind, respectful, but impersonal. It was for Dolly that her gray eyes warmed.

"It was so good of you to wait!" she said, taking Dolly's hand.

"The waiting was pleasant. Mr. Courtenay and the bishop made it so, and I've seen the conservatory. Look here!" And she touched the wonderful blooms.

"We were delighted to be heedful of the stranger in our midst, being not unaware that we were entertaining an angel," smiled the bishop.

"You will pardon me for carrying Miss Tredegar off now. I've kept her waiting an unconscionable time as it is. Folks as busy as Miss Tredegar haven't too much time to spare," said Aurora, with her hand on Dolly's arm.

*Miss Tredegar!* A bomb exploding beneath their feet couldn't have bowled over the two gentlemen more thoroughly than did the detonation of that name. The bishop opened and shut his

mouth like a hooked fish. *Tredegar!* Oh—ah—good Lord! The wonder was that he hadn't recognized her at once! Why, Dolly Tredegar danced in and out of advertisements, even! Conscious of a great shock, he turned pink to his sacerdotal gills. Dolly casting a fleeting, naughty glance bishopward, he turned pinker.

But every vestige of color faded from Jordan Courtenay's face, and his heavy brows met in a black and bitter frown. A horrid, sick revulsion, a very nausea of rage and protest, shook him. He shivered as with deadly chill.

"Tredegar! *You!* Great God! No—you are not, say you are not, Dolly Tredegar!"

"I am Dolly Tredegar," said she proudly, and wondered that any one should suppose her anything but proud to admit it.

"The woman that my lunatic nephew wrecked himself for—you!"

"I don't think I understand," said Dolly, chin up. "Neither your nephew nor anybody else's nephew ever wrecked himself for me that I'm aware of." She fixed her great black eyes upon him fearlessly. "I'd hardly call Frank *wrecked*," she ended significantly.

The man laughed harshly. He was trembling.

"If you cherish," he spat at her, "any notion of marrying him, on the prospect of my relenting in the last chapter and leaving him my money, change your mind at once." Stung by a burning rage and jealousy, he spoke brutally. "I told him so, when he was fool enough to choose you instead of me. Was he honest enough to tell you that?"

Dolly smote her hands together softly.

"He didn't tell me anything, except that you had agreed to disagree and that he had gotten out. He didn't blame you. But now that I've met you, I don't blame *him*," said the little dancer bluntly. "You haven't enough good judgment and you've too much

bad temper. Why, you stupid thing, don't you understand it wasn't Dolly Tredegar he was choosing, but *freedom?*"

*"Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet. Thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate within thy locks, and the hair of thine head like purple. Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me."*

It isn't always safe for a middle-aged gentleman to remember his Bible.

"Have done with lies and subtrefuges!" he gnashed at her. "Are you the sort of woman a man gives up? Now that I have seen you, I admit I can more readily understand why the young fool likes you."

"If you would allow yourself to be halfway human, you'd like me yourself," said Dolly coolly. "Why shouldn't you like me? Why shouldn't anybody like me? Why, I'd like me myself!" flashed Dolly.

"Why not? Because you have wrecked my home!" thundered the angry man.

"Oh, poppycock! Bosh! Piffle! Nonsense! Nobody could wreck your home. You never had a home. All you've ever had is a big house to live in and be horrid in!"

"Very well. I had a house to live in, and a nephew to live in it," he retorted, "until he chose you, and the godless life you represent. He had his chance. He made his bed; now let him lie on it!"

Dolly stared at him.

"What is the matter with you, anyhow?" she demanded. "Why should he give me up? And what's godless about me? Or about Frank? Is it that I dance? Or that Frank is gay, young, kind?"

"When a young man is too kind to a dancer, it is time for his relatives to look into his affairs," said Frank's relative frigidly.

"Have you ever seen me dance, either

of you?" She looked from Courtenay to the bishop.

"Look here! We live according to our gifts. The bishop, for instance, holds down his job according to his lights—thanking God, of course, that they aren't footlights. And *you* think you're charitable when you're only stupid. But *I* bless the Lord for my face, and I praise Him with my dancing feet. Like this!"

And with a swallow's swoop, she was across the floor. "A toss, and her head was free of her hat; a swift movement, and one of the gorgeous blooms nodded above her ear, thrust into her blue-black hair, as the bishop had suggested. Crooning a gypsy air in her rich and throaty voice, Dolly began to dance.

The life of the men and women watching her centered in their eyes. She was a living flower that swayed to and fro while a breeze stirred it; she was a leaf, a tinted leaf, that blew lightly away with the last breath of the summer; she was bird, and butterfly, and a young birch upon the mountain-side, frolicking with the wind and the sunlight that touched her lovelily; she was a dryad, a wild thing of forest glades, a spirit, an elf, a ripple upon water, the very soul of gracious movement; and always she was Dolly Tredegar, praising the Lord with her dancing feet.

She drifted hither and thither, she enticed and eluded and retreated and enraptured. She was that which all men desire and none may possess. She was the delight of the eyes, the desire of the heart. She intrigued the senses as poetry and music do, as birds and clouds and singing winds and clear spaces and all lovely things alive do. And she was Dolly Tredegar!

Jordan Courtenay did not move. He stood rigid as a man turned to stone, and his living spirit stood a-tiptoe within him to stretch and strain after the bright, ethereal thing turning motion

into purest poetry before his eyes. He felt that wild, sweet, terrible pain that beautiful things wring from the heart of man, until his heartstrings all but cracked beneath it. And then, of a sudden, as a song ceases, a bird flies, she stopped and was still.

"Themselves dance like that in a May moonlight, when the hawthorn's a-flower," said Mary McKinstry, with a long, quivering sigh.

Jordan Courtenay looked deep into the eyes of the "dancing hussy" he had bidden Francis put by, and his face contracted. A spasm passed over it, and then it set, like the pale, still face of a dead man, and out of this marble pallor his dark eyes stared with burning intensity. His hands clenched until the knuckles showed white. Without a word, he swung around sharply and walked out of the room.

## CHAPTER IX.

Jordan Courtenay felt himself become a laughingstock for men and angels. He had been seized by one of those terrible passions of the middle-aged that are not the least of the terrors of life. They are tragedies beside which the romantic griefs of youth are but as summer lightning to the bolt that destroys. They arouse the amusement of the fool, the amazement of the wise, the pity of the good.

He tried to convince himself that the emotion he was experiencing was merely just anger at an impudent trick practiced upon him by a designing adventuress, who was, of course, after his money on Frank's account; also, that Frank was a scoundrel who would infallibly be hanged. But all the while, that cold, merciless self which dwells in the depths of each man's nature, that submarine self which torpedoes the merchantmen of pride and makes the crew of vanity walk the plank, kept bobbing up an ironical periscope:

—“Jordan! It isn’t possible you’re trying to fool me? A man may fool his friends, his enemies, his own surface self, but never deep-sea me, Jordan! Not any more than he can fool God! Jordan, you are what you accused Frank of being. Your charity is a sham, your piety a fraud. Aurora is goodness, Frank is youth, but Dolly is love, Jordan. Dolly is love.”

Glooming in his room, with his head on his balled fists, Dolly danced before him as the sirens tortured Anthony in the desert. He could see every turn of her head, every least lithe movement of her pliant, lovely body, her lips as a thread of scarlet, her temples as pomegranates within her locks. And he was parched with fever and shaken with chills.

To him, in his agony, came secretaries with reports, brisk dispensers of established benefactions, probers and searchers out of those worthy to receive doles, cases like, say this:

No. 788999—X. Smith, John; forty-two; pants’ presser; tuberculous; married, seven children, oldest ten, youngest three weeks; wife tuberculous also; no work in three months; discharged last position account objectionable language to foreman, also spitting and coughing.

Now in the old, easy-going, pre-Aurora days, one got Smith a succession of jobs, until he mercifully coughed himself out of the world. Got his wife a good job, too—nothing to do but scrub an office building at night. One helped to bury the children, and charged what one had done up to the Lord, Who presumably kept a ledger.

Then had come Aurora Janeway and made one do things that cost twice as much money and caused thrice as much trouble and brought one neither repose of mind nor gratitude. Take those tenements of his, for instance. When clamors arose and he had wanted to sell, Aurora had demurred. She had just looked at him with those intoler-

ably clear gray eyes and explained that people who shifted responsibilities might be good business men, but were bad philanthropists. She thought charity began at home, and she forced him to clean up around his own doorsteps.

For this reason, his mission donations had not been so large as of yore, and he was called a grasping capitalist, while the dwellers in his model, made-over tenements thought he had done no more than he should have done, and weren’t even faintly grateful!

Again, when pleasant, enthusiastic ladies called with the latest notions for prodding the submerged—notions that were sketchy and left room for one’s imagination—Aurora came and blew upon them, and sent them whirling away like chaff. And all these people said things about him—not complimentary things. Many, who didn’t understand the springs that moved him, wondered how that lovely Miss Janeway could put up with him!

The whole thing wouldn’t have been so bad if Aurora hadn’t been so good, but she was unerringly right. Her facts were real facts, her figures errorless. Sometimes he thought he was going to be waked up on Judgment Day morning by Aurora Janeway, instead of the Angel Gabriel. He had a horrid vision of Aurora standing on the right side of the Judgment Seat, classifying goats and sheep. And he was sure that if she said of one, “This is a goat,” no matter if it wore wool and looked like a sheep to St. Peter himself, or if she picked out something with hair and horns and said, “Here is a lamb in goatskin,” her verdict would stand.

He fell into fits of sullen brooding. And then doctors came and poked their fingers into his anatomy, and thumped him, and laid their heads upon his bosom, and had him run out his tongue, and told him he was improving. They made him walk every day, rain or shine; they took away his nerve tonics

and made him go to bed at regular hours, like a convict. Simmons' led a dog's life just then. But Jordan Courtenay really went on getting healthier and healthier, and angrier and angrier.

One haunting fear obsessed him. Hadn't he really swindled himself? He knew that life wasn't giving him anything that satisfied him. He saw himself growing old without ever having been young, shut up in a narrow, joyless sphere of his own making, while outside in the sunshine moved—Dolly Tredegar and his nephew Frank.

"You're losing weight," his physicians said, and they made him eat rare beefsteak and drink milk and suck fresh eggs, because men of great possessions must be looked after. And they let him walk less and ride more.

His tailors had been used to demur respectfully against the rather old-fashioned cut of Mr. Courtenay's garments. Now they shuddered when they saw him enter their doors, for never had they had a more captious, finical, hypercritical customer. Their bills were outrageous, but they earned their money, for the outward form of Mr. Jordan Courtenay became a model for middle-aged gentlemen. He didn't suggest middle age, but rather a particularly handsome man who knew how to wear his clothes.

Then he went to see her dance. And he watched her drift across the stage, with a glory and a glamour upon her almost more than mortal, while a great audience hung breathless with delight upon her every movement. And when she had ceased, the applause crashed like thunder. There were piled-up mounds of costly flowers for her, whom the public adored. *He*, too, had once given her flowers, one of which she had worn in her hair, the while she had danced for *him*. He sat back in the shadow of his box, watching her with burning eyes; and then he went

home and lay staring into the darkness. He wondered if Frank was with her very often. It had astonished him that Frank had gone to Colin Murray and been taken into his business, but he put it down to Murray's eccentricity rather than to Frank's ability. He wondered what *she* thought of Frank, how she regarded him, now that he was a beggar. And in his heart he understood that it would make no difference. They two had youth and beauty and genius. What more could the universe offer them?

How spiritedly the little witch had defended Frank and herself! And how brutally he had conducted himself, in his own house! He had had the opportunity to win her liking, and he had let it slip. Alas, what horrid madness had seized him, to behave thus to the beloved, the beautiful? If she thought of him at all now, it must be with aversion and disgust!

He was a proud man, a stubborn man. Never had he been able to humble his stiff-necked, arrogant spirit to any other human being. But—never had he loved any other thus. His love for her swallowed his pride as in an abyss. Yet it took him some time to bring himself to do what he realized he must do sooner or later—seek her and ask her pardon. He remembered Frank's gallant defense of her. He clung now to Frank's opinion of her with a pathetic eagerness. He desired as passionately to believe good of Dolly as he had passionately desired to impute evil to her.

Thus it happened that Miss Tredegar received a curt note signed "Jordan Courtenay," asking for a few minutes of her time.

"Ho! Indeed!" puzzled Dolly. "Now what under the sun can Mr. High-and-mighty want to see me for? I'd think he'd seen enough of me that one time to last him for the rest of his life! I wonder if it could be some-



thing about Frank. Well—I'd better see him and find out."

While he was waiting, in a fury of impatience for her reply, Simmons thought of resigning, the doctors thought of cyanide, and his pastor thought of hell with Christian joy. He refused aid to his pet Chinese mission, remarking that they could hang themselves by their own pigtails for all of him, and that he thought drowning girl babies a highly commendable practice, since it prevented them from growing up and plaguing men.

As for Miss Janeway, he told her to go right ahead and do her worst, but not to torment him about it. He'd been fed up on philanthropy. And she herself had better look around her, pick out some decent chap, marry him, and have babies of her own, instead of meddling with other people's brats.

"You must be ill," said Aurora, and under her steady eyes, he squirmed. He couldn't roar at her, "*Comfort me with apples, stay me with flagons, for I am sick with love!*" could he?

"I am not ill! Not in the least ill!" he barked. "I'm merely cutting my eye-teeth—that's what's happening to me!"

Dolly would have laughed, but Aurora rang for Simmons, explained that Mr. Courtenay seemed to be in a dangerously excitable and nervous state, and wondered if Simmons had better give him some of the nerve tonic. Simmons saw the glass of medicine thrown out of the window and had the tray shielded at his head for his pains.

"Simmons!" grated his master. "Look at me! Do I look like a man who must be bottle fed by a puppy-faced doctor?"

"No, sir," said Simmons respectfully. "I shouldn't say you do, sir. I never did believe there was much the matter with you, sir. It was just an error of your mortal mind," said Simmons.

"Well, I'm damned!"

"Oh, no, not necessarily, sir," protested Simmons. And picking up the tray, he left Mr. Courtenay's mortal mind staggering.

Dolly was in no particular hurry to reply. She knew her Jordan Courtenay, and a full week elapsed before he received a monogrammed sheet of note paper stating briefly, that Miss Tredegear would be pleased to see Mr. Courtenay upon such an afternoon.

When, promptly upon the stroke of the hour mentioned, he was ushered into Miss Tredegear's pretty sitting room, the little lady received him with demure dignity. She was cunningly and carefully robed in one of those scarlet frocks which so subtly expressed and suited her vivid personality. She took his breath away.

In spite of the fact that she was naughtily mischievous, she was so truly kind-hearted, so free from real malice, that he found it easier than he had dared hope to make her understand that he was sorry and desired to be friends. She was too familiar with the inconsistencies of men's behavior to women to be astonished at this exhibition of it. She hoped that, having seen the error of his ways toward herself, he would presently see the error of his ways toward Frank. But it was significant that neither of them mentioned Frank's name.

They had tea together. Dolly knew how effective she was at a tea table. He didn't like tea, but he would have swallowed a cup of hemlock and found it delicious. One or two younger men—he knew their fathers, confound them!—dropped in. But it didn't enter their heads that the distinguished gentleman at his ease in Miss Tredegear's sitting room was Frank Courtenay's ogre uncle. Frank, indeed, had never mentioned him save with respect, yet his reputation had crept forth and gained in the going.

When the younger callers had gone,

he, too, rose reluctantly. Big man and little woman shook hands with each other. They had decided to become friends.

### CHAPTER X.

Harkness had the born leader's knack of seizing upon and using whatever material came to his hand, and he made use of Frank's gifts now. The young gentleman who had writhed at a false note, to whom an ugly sight, an evil smell, were as crimes, played at times upon a frightful piano to whose tinny tinklings the under dog frisked with forlorn floppings of mangy ears and grotesque strainings of flea-bitten ribs. He lifted the carefully cultivated baritone that had been one of his greatest social charms and sang folk songs to which outcasts paid the tribute of grimy tears. They respected, feared, and admired Harkness; they loved Frank. His name was a sort of legal tender, a passport in the depths. His old life was as far away from him as the world before the flood might have been to the pilot of the ark after the waters receded.

There was one factor in the change more potent even than Harkness, one that he hardly named to himself—Aurora Janeway. They passed and re-passed each other, and the eyes of both lingered. Aurora wished, wistfully, that he had found her as fair as, say, Dolly Tredegar. And his dark face was ever coming between her and all other faces. "All men else were to her as shadows." She didn't know, of course, that under Frank's grave respectfulness was the wild wish to take her by the hand and never let her go away from him any more. She didn't know that he lost himself in endless reveries as to what her mouth might be like when she smiled, how her gray eyes would look when they kindled; or how vehemently he wished that the mouth might smile, the gray eyes, clear as the waters

of the river of life, enkindle for him alone.

Well, that was impossible, Frank knew. He had nothing to offer her, who had changed places with him. He made no foolish effort to forget her. He did what Murray did, what Harkness did, what all worth-while folks do—plunged into work.

Frank could not remember just when he began to notice the change in Murray, or to sense the disaster that was approaching. It came about so simply, grew so insidiously. But he found himself sitting on the edge of his bed, one night, with a leaden heart and an anxious mind, wishing to high heaven that he had never brought the folks in his rooming house to Murray's notice, never permitted Murray to come, in an idle hour, to smoke and lounge in the old-fashioned room, smile secretly and tiredly at Harkness—and meet Winny Davis Culpepper.

Frank remembered just how Winny Davis had looked, standing on his threshold with the inevitable doily-covered plate in her hand. A big white apron fell to the hem of her worn blue skirt, beneath which one saw her ankles, slim as a young deer's. Winny Davis had a skin like one of her own magnolias, a boy's flat-hipped slimness, a girl's virginal lips. Murray, taking his pipe from his lips, saw youth incarnate. So Fate, in the shape of Winny, came upon him.

Murray didn't mean to fall in love with her. He had for her, at first, somewhat the feeling of one to whose hand a wild bird has fluttered—a feeling half of fear lest it take flight. He adored her slurred r's, the way she had of turning her head, the light upon her hair, as if it had been sprinkled over with gold dust. And when she presently learned to look up, with an eager and innocent pleasure in his appearance, and tell him, "Why, good evenin', Mistah Murray! I'm glad to see you!"

Mistah Murray had to put down a fierce desire to pick her up in his arms, put that darling head of hers in the hollow of his shoulder, turn her creamy face up, and kiss her. The first time Murray was conscious of this desire, it astounded and horrified him; he had thought himself immune. With snarling Socrates, he had rejoiced that for him the chain of love was broken. He forgot that Socrates was eighty and ugly when he made that impudent boast, and that he himself was far from being either.

He had the power to enchant youth, when he chose, and he chose now, with a fierce intensity hidden under a cool, pleasant friendliness. He taught her more, in half an afternoon, than her class leader had been able to teach her in half a year. And he gave her boxes of violets, great lavish blobs of purple sweetness to bury her nose in and be wet-eyed over—they were so reminiscent of the garden 'way down South. When she looked up, mutely, and thanked him with those big, wet brown eyes of hers, Murray cursed his gods even while he blessed them.

And then Frank began to wake up. It had surprised and flattered him of late to have details of work to which Murray attached great importance left more and more in his hands. It kept his nose to the grindstone, but then it was such invaluable training! He was a bit chagrined when he discovered the truth—that it wasn't of *him* Murray was thinking, but of Winny Davis! It gave Murray more time. He wasn't a bad man—only a swindled man, very much in love and unable to deprive himself of his one happiness, the companionship of his beloved, whenever he could seize upon it.

And you couldn't blame Winny Davis. Suppose you were lovely and twenty, transported from 'way down South to a New York lodging house; and you studied art at Cooper Union,

such times as you weren't washing your stockings in your hand basin, or frying a sausage over your alcohol stove; and you weren't doing so well as you'd hoped, and the future was anything but rose-colored. Would even the fact that the best of good divinity students loved you so much that, because you were lonely, you had felt grateful and thought you loved him in return keep you from really, truly, with all your heart and soul, falling in love with such a man as Colin Murray?

I think not. I think it would happen to you exactly as it happened to Winny Davis. You'd be athrill to the finger tips with quivering delight; everything and everybody would be delightful; you'd laugh like an April brook, cry like an April rain, and your voice would flute and mellow and sweeten like a throstle's in the gloaming, and your eyes would be as summer stars, and your youth would be as a rose with the dew of your heart fresh upon it, and the morning gold of your life brightening it. Winny Davis did not know as yet that she was in love with Murray, but she had learned that she didn't care for Harkness.

Murray was torn between contending forces. Suppose he stepped aside and let her go? Suppose he made her know her own heart, claimed her for love's sake? But that would be to bring upon himself a desolation not to be endured, and this would be to invite shipwreck in which they might both perish. Divorce his wife? He had no legal grounds. He couldn't say to his peers: "This woman has given me no child; she is too coldly selfish even to sin humanly. Wherefore, I pray you to release me." All he could do was to devour his own heart, gnaw the wrist of desire with the teeth of despair. He would have neglected his work disastrously, save for Francis Courtenay, who held him to his tasks, bringing all his tact and patience into play.

Frank was poignantly troubled. A year since, even, and he would have raised the eyebrow of indifference at so commonplace a situation. His morality had been politeness. The unpardonable sin had been crudeness. One might do as one pleased, so long as one behaved like a gentleman. But Harkness had given him another point of view; or, rather, Harkness had torn away all the tinsel and forced him to see the truth of things, the stern realities. He didn't blame Murray, because he understood him; he didn't, he couldn't blame Winny Davis; but he agonized over Harkness.

Harkness was grateful to Murray for brightening the young girl's rather dreary life. He understood that Winny Davis loved things of which he himself had scant knowledge. Wherefore, when Murray sauntered along with tickets for this or that exhibit, he would urge Winny Davis to go—and remind them that he hadn't time. At first the girl hung back and demurred. Later, she took it for granted that Harkness wasn't coming, and forbore to ask him. In turn, she and Murray ceased to accompany Harkness. His exhibits were not so pleasing; they distressed the eye and offended the nose.

And under the magic touch of love, Winny Davis grew softer and gentler and lovelier, so that Harkness wondered reverently why God had allowed one of His angels to love his unworthy self. And Frank was cold with apprehension. And Murray grew thinner and grayer and, away from Winny Davis, morose and resentful. He would sit bunched up beside his desk, lips straight, eyes narrowed, and brood; he was cynical over life and work, over everything, in fact, that wasn't Winny Davis. Frank worked as he had never dreamed himself capable of working, and dug and sweated and ran Murray's great business for him. The wings of the he-butterfly were expanding into

eagle plumage; he was taking to the heights, facing the sun.

## CHAPTER XI.

Frank had known for some weeks that Murray was on the verge of taking the bit between his teeth. He felt that he could, if necessary, knock Murray down, sit on him, lock him up; but how deal with Winny Davis? What was she going to do? That she cared for Murray as passionately as Murray cared for her was evident. What, then, was one to do for Winny Davis?

At this juncture Murray one day laid his hand on Frank's shoulder and remarked in an offhand manner:

"You'll have to look after things for a while, old chap. I'm going to run up to Saskatchewan for a month. Fact is, I'm rather all in. I've got to lay up a bit."

Francis drew a breath of relief. A month in the north woods would pull Murray through, if anything could. They rushed through what necessary work Murray had to attend to personally; then Francis had the offices to himself. That night he took Winny Davis to the theater, and afterward, with Harkness, the three talked pleasantly until the girl yawned and left them. She was in excellent spirits. He thought he had never seen her so pretty. Harkness himself looked pale, but Winny Davis was colored like a rose.

A day or two later, a note from Miss Dolly Tredegar, gently reproaching him for neglecting his old friends, was laid on his desk. He brightened. He hadn't seen Dolly for some time, and a friendly chat with her was just what he needed. He telephoned that he would lunch with her. Then he remembered that he had a halfway engagement with Harkness, and phoned him that he wouldn't be able to keep

it until later, as he was lunching with Miss Tredegar.

Dolly was unfeignedly glad to see him. She plied him with those small attentions with which women ensnare men, the while she exercised her fine art of making him talk about himself. She was too clever not to note the new, fine reticence, the disciplined strength of him. His mouth was still boyishly beautiful, but the eyes were deeper and clearer, eyes reflective, penetrating, and very kind. He intrigued Dolly. And presently she asked abruptly:

"Why didn't you tell me that your uncle had really quarreled with you about me?"

"You were," he admitted, "a contributing cause. But the thing itself was bound to happen, sooner or later. His true ground of complaint lay in my being what I was."

Dolly concurred. Frank, as she had told his uncle tartly enough, hadn't fought for her, but for his own freedom. To-day she realized that he had gained it.

"Dolly," he asked her presently, "if you were to see one of the nicest girls in the world walking about on the edge of things, what would you do?"

"I see that every day," said Dolly. "And it all depends on whether they've made up their minds to tumble in."

"But if they don't know?"

"Is it wise to enlighten them?" she wondered in her turn. "My dear boy, can one do anything for people until they've discovered they're fools? And then, of course, it's too late!"

He blanched.

"Are you," asked Dolly, "by any means—involved? Or are you just the innocent bystander?"

"Bystander," briefly.

"Then," said the actress, not attempting to hide the relief she felt, "move on. Or construct for yourself a cyclone cellar."

But he shook his head. He looked so distressed that she said impatiently:

"Frank, listen to me. If you make it plain to a woman that you think she's likely to make a fool of herself, and she's *not* a fool, she can't forgive you for understanding her. And if she's *not* a fool, she can't forgive you for misunderstanding her. And the man in the case will impute to you—well, personal motives. Now do you see?"

Frank saw.

"Does your girl, by any manner of mercy, happen to know Miss Aurora Janeway personally? If she does, there's your life line! Aurora Janeway is the only woman I ever knew that other women were willing to have take a hand in their affairs."

"But it just happens that my little friend doesn't know her. And—well, one couldn't call in a stranger—not even such a one as Miss Janeway."

"She has certainly worked wonders with your uncle—made him make himself over." Dolly looked at Frank with an odd, sidewise intensity. "And I don't think he thanks her. He chafes on the bit. Do you know, I really *like* your uncle?"

"You've met him, then?" Frank looked astonished.

"Oh, yes! He wasn't at all glad to see me—at first. When he discovered my identity, in fact, he—well, he made remarks, not complimentary remarks."

Frank reddened.

"Oh, don't look so ashamed of him!" said she, laughing. "He was ashamed enough of himself afterward. He came and apologized. We're quite good friends," she finished, with a fluttering of the eyelids.

"My sainted aunt!" gasped Frank. "You're a witch, Dolly!"

"Oh, no. One doesn't have to be anything more than just a woman," purred Dolly. "Frank, do you know what I'm wondering? I'm wondering

if your rusty Westerner in the slop-shop clothes can be the man you're so troubled about? I'm wondering what in the name of wonder could have induced that gangling saint to misbehave? But you neyer can tell, can you?"

Frank's eyebrows came together.

"Harkness? *Harkness?* Why, he couldn't! He wouldn't know how! It's not in his nature! Harkness," said Frank slowly, and with finality, "is truly and really one of the Lord's anointed and appointed servants. Harkness is a saint."

Cuddled against her cushions, her cigarette between her fingers, Dolly laughed aloud.

"You!" she giggled. "You! All right, then, he's a saint! And, naturally, there's a good-looking, healthy sinner that the girl prefers? Not so long since, I'd have thought that sinner must be yourself. Ah, my poor friend, you make me feel sad! You were such a dear, delightful sinner, Frank!"

The dear, delightful sinner did not smile. His mouth took on stern strength, those changed, wise eyes deepened; there was something of the priest in their look.

"I was a he-butterfly, as my uncle said. He was quite just in his estimate," he said simply.

Dolly's penciled black brows met over her little nose.

"Frank," cried she, in an alarmed and moved voice, "Frank, for Heaven's sake, remove yourself from the bad influence of the good! That man is ruining your character. You're losing your sense of humor!"

"That man is saving my soul," said Frank quietly.

Dolly could hardly believe her ears. She flung her cigarette aside and sat erect, her eyes widening.

"This is terrible!" said Dolly. "Gracious powers, why doesn't somebody stop you? Why doesn't Colin Murray

do something? Why does Murray allow you to be hypnotized by a man who wears bought ties and calls a lady 'marm?' Undoubtedly you are mad! The next thing, you'll be thumping a tambourine and bawling, 'Gee-ell-o-r-y, Glory!' on street corners! Does Murray know how far you've gone?"

Frank's face expressed so curious an emotion that of a sudden Dolly stopped, stared, and puckered her lips into a whistle. With one of those terrifying flashes of woman intuition, she hit upon the truth.

"Frank! The man is Murray? And the girl that pretty one that your gossling gospeler said looked like me?"

"Why," faltered Frank, taken aback, "why, I may be mistaken——"

"No. You're not," said Dolly soberly. "It's too horrid not to be true." And she shook her head. "It was inevitable," she decided presently. "And if Murray wants that girl hard enough, he'll take her. I'm sorry for your preacher if he loves her."

"I'm sorry for them all," said Frank heavily. "I wish to God I knew what to do!"

"Well, he's made one good move—to get away for a while. Canada's a good place for him right now," consoled Dolly. And even as she spoke, her neat maid appeared, with the intelligence that somebody was asking for Mr. Frank Courtenay over the phone.

"This is Harkness," said the voice over the wire. "Thank God I knew where to get you, Frank! Can you come to me, and come ready to start on a short journey?"

The fear in Frank's heart leaped up, but he answered readily:

"Yes, I'll come. Can you tell me over the phone what the trouble is? Not an accident to—to Winny Davis, is it?"

"Not exactly. But it concerns her. Frank, come!"

"Throw a few things into my suit



case and bring it along, to save time. Where shall I meet you?"

Harkness named the station, and the receiver clicked.

"You must pardon me if I have to rush off unceremoniously," Frank told Dolly. But his troubled face said more than that.

"Was that your friend Harkness?" asked the dancer.

And when he nodded, she said, with her hand on his arm: "Frank, when a man and a woman find each other irresistible, the one thing a sensible friend can do is to stand by until they bump their heads so hard on reality that it brings them to reason. But if there's anything under the sky that you think I can do, you'll let me help you, won't you? I'd do 'most anything for you, Frank."

He thanked her, refused her instantly proffered car, and ran for the nearest subway, which isn't subject to traffic delays or likely to be held up for maddening and interminable minutes by a ham-fisted policeman.

He was in such a raging hurry that he didn't see the face of all faces watching him from a passing car. She sighed, and gripped her hands in her lap, and sank back upon her cushions. She had seen him coming out of Miss Dolly Tredegars apartment house. If Aurora Janeway ever experienced a pang of jealousy, perhaps she felt it then.

Nor did either she or Frank see the tall, white-haired gentleman who, a few minutes later, alighted from his limousine and, with an eagerness that made him boyishly brisk and put color into his cheek and fire into his eyes, had himself taken up to Miss Tredegars apartment and was there welcomed by the little dancer with the easy familiarity of established friendship. One wondered what Aurora and Frank would have thought could they have seen him take a case from his pocket, snap it open, and with his own hands fasten

around the dancers perfect throat the most perfect string of the old Courtenay pearls.

## CHAPTER XII.

Harkness had been receiving anonymous letters for some time past, friendly warnings to "open his eyes and see what was going on under his nose." He had thought at first that they referred to Winny's friendship with Frank, and so had paid no attention to them, beyond despising their sender for an idiot. It had simply not entered his head, until the last, that the man mentioned in them might be Murray.

"I was raised by folks who have a stern sense of the sacredness of marriage," he explained. "With us, when a man marries, he sticks to his bargain so long as it's humanly possible. Even when it isn't, he doesn't deliberately set himself to win the affections of a young and trusting girl, knowing all along that he can't make her his wife. That," said Harkness, clenching his hands, "is damnable! That's one of the unpardonable sins!"

Frank looked distressed.

"Harkness, you don't know all he's been up against. I do. And he's had to suffer. Man, he's suffered!"

"Suffer? Suffering is the price tag on existence," said Harkness. "You pay, if you're decent, or you're a thief and shirk it. There's no middle course."

But Frank shook his head.

"Go on with the story. I haven't heard yet."

"The last letter was so explicit that—well, it opened my eyes. I was afraid the sunlight might see her name set down there, in black and white! So I burned it, feeling like a hangman!" And he broke out, with subdued violence: "Oh, don't think I blame her! How could she help caring for him the most? I don't even blame him for loving her. But, loving her, how could

he let her come to grief? I," said Harkness, twisting his big hands, "would sooner die on the cross! I'd drive her away from me, rather!"

It came to Frank that Winny Davis knew this, and that perhaps a woman deeply in love might prefer the human weakness that took because it loved and needed, rather than the strength that could forego and stand alone. For love looks askance at caution, in which it scents coldness. Its secret verdict always is, always will be:

*"If you really cared, if you loved me as I love you, you would not, you could not, let me go!"*

And Frank looked with pity at Harkness, who was saying, in broken whispers:

"I knew. And I groveled before my God, for I saw that she whom I loved cared nothing for me, but for the husband of another woman. And I saw that he—adored her—and said to myself, 'Because he does, he'll go away. He won't harm her. Nobody could think of harming my girl.' When he went, I thought it was because he was a good man, and I was thrown off my guard." He looked up miserably. "You told me he had gone to Canada."

"He did go to Canada!" cried Frank, but felt himself go pale.

"Where are you to write him?" asked Harkness.

"Why—why—his address is uncertain—off in the woods with guides—no use to write or wire him. He wanted to be let alone, didn't want to hear one word about business or anything else, until he came back," mumbled Frank.

"He's within thirty miles of us, and she has gone to him," said Harkness, with a stony face. "Miss McDuffie discovered it." Miss McDuffie was the woman who typed plays. "Miss McDuffie came to me, just before I phoned you, and told me all she knew. It was she who sent the unsigned letters—out

of the affection she bore us two. She had seen that he cared for our dear girl—and it frightened her—and then she discovered that Winny Davis cared for him, instead of me. She wondered at my blindness. And—well, she played watchdog—for the love she had for us."

Frank could well believe that. Miss McDuffie said her prayers to Henry Harkness, and she adored Winny Davis. She was a lonesome woman, and these two were the hills of youth and romance and beauty in her flat life.

"The day before Murray left, a special messenger brought Winny Davis a letter from him. Miss McDuffie happened to be with her at the time, saw the envelope, and recognized the writing. You know she's seen his writing scores of time about your room, Frank. Knowing what she knew, she was worried. Why should he be writing to Winny Davis? She'd—well, she'd heard him speaking to Winny Davis once—and seen his face—and she'd heard our dear girl answer—and seen her eyes.

"Winny Davis sent the boy back with a reply, and then went on quietly showing her new sketches to Miss McDuffie," Harkness paused and stared at Frank. Then: "She thinks this is a piece of his letter. The rest of it was burned, you see."

And he put into Frank's hand a scrap of paper.

—with what impatience! This is such a little place as we have dreamed of, but not perfect until you come, my dearest dear. My heart ticks off the minutes until I see you. Beloved, you promised! You promised, and my life hangs upon your word. Come!

Yours, ever yours,  
C. M.

"Well?" breathed Harkness. But Frank, with a face of stupefaction, turned the charred bit of paper over and over in his shaking hand.

"This morning Miss McDuffie got a message to come after some manu-

scripts. You know she's always getting messages like that. Well, she went. And while she was waiting on a corner, Winny Davis passed by in a taxi, and Miss McDuffie glimpsed a large new suit case on the seat beside her. She was surprised, and then uneasy. Winny Davis hadn't said anything about going away, though Miss McDuffie had spoken to her only that morning. The more she thought of it, the uneasier she grew.

"So she got off her car at the Grand Central and made for a telephone booth. She wanted to phone me, to see if I knew anything about it. There was a great crowd coming in at the minute, and Miss McDuffie caught sight, ahead of her, of a face turned sideways. It was Winny Davis, so intent upon her own business that she wasn't paying attention to anything or anybody else. She bought a ticket, but of course Miss McDuffie didn't know where to. She saw the girl, suit case in hand, go through the gate to her train.

"Miss McDuffie looked around. And by the providence of God, our old friend Connolly, the policeman, was right at her elbow. Connolly went with her to the ticket agent, who fortunately remembered the young lady she described and the point for which she'd bought a ticket.

"Miss McDuffie raced home. I hadn't come in yet. So she went into Winny Davis' room and looked about. Everything was in apple-pie order, as usual. There was no sign of a hurried departure. *Winny Davis had known she was going.* That made Miss McDuffie feel a little sick. She says her knees went wobbly, and she sat down on the floor. Then she saw that the girl had been burning things in the grate, and she went over and pried among them. It was only when she pulled back the fender that she got this one small scrap. Everything else was

burned. She remembered the special letter, and there was no doubt, to her mind, that this was a part of it.

"When I came home, I found her waiting for me, crying. So I phoned you." He added quietly: "We two are Winny Davis' brothers; and this is our little sister, Frank."

It was a very short journey. When they arrived at their station, a gloomy agent admitted that such a young lady had come on the one-o'clock train, had hired one of Brown's autos, and had driven off, he didn't know where. Possibly Brown's could tell them.

Brown's told them. The young lady had gone to Sweetferns Farm, a very quiet, pretty place, five miles across country. And then Harkness and Frank were flying down a country road whose beauties were lost upon them. The ten minutes it took them to reach Sweetferns seemed ten hours.

The Dutch farmer received them stolidly. Yes, he could give them a room. Yes, there was a young lady. She had the upper front room, a very good room, with a fine view. They were friends of hers, wished to see her? So? But she had strolled out, with the one other guest in the house. Perhaps—he shook his head and looked around him vaguely—they might walk down to the orchard and find her there.

A very ugly child came to their aid. There was a young lady, an' she was with a gent'man, an' they was walkin' over to our cimetry. For a quarter she piloted them thither, and for another left them.

It was an old, old cemetery, that, with lichened stones and green, mossy, forgotten graves, old-fashioned flowers, old gnarled trees set aslant by the winds of many winters. Over in a corner, a bit of a brook tinkled its trickle of a lullaby to the dead. Near it, in a clear space, with her hat off and her back against a scrubby old tree, sat Winny Davis. Her face was uplifted,

and she watched, with quiet pleasure, the white clouds drift lazily overhead. Prone his long length beside her, his head propped upon his hand, his eyes upon her face, was Colin Murray.

She was the first of the two to see the intruders, for Frank felt that they were no less. She was surprised, but not disturbed. Murray's bright blue eyes, of a steely intensity, challenged their right to be there.

"Winny Davis," said Harkness, looking down at her from his great height, "Winny Davis, why are you here, among the holy dead, with the husband of a living woman?" He did not speak as a man to his beloved, but as the minister, with a grave authority.

"If yo'-all will sit down," said Winny Davis, "so I can look in yo' eyes, it'll be easiah for me to talk."

Frank felt foolish and sorry, Harkness agonized. Murray, after that one glance, paid no further attention to them.

"All of these holy dead, as yo' call them," said Winny Davis, reflectively, "were alive—like us. Some of them took their love, and some let it go. Now they're all dead together, and yo' can't tell the wise from the fool.

"What I'm tryin' to figuah out," she went on, smiling faintly at Harkness, who had made an impatient gesture, "is this: Aren't yo' just as bad off, in the end, if yo' let yo' love go from yo' as yo'd be if yo' took it when it came? Isn't it just as well to go by yo' heart an' say, 'Yes,' and beah what-evah comes without whimperin', as to say, 'No,' and then withah and withah, a little bit every empty day, until yo' die—without evah havin' lived?"

"One does one's duty," said Harkness sternly.

Winny Davis looked at him reflectively.

"But what *is* one's duty? To be happy or unhappy? Yo' see, I've got this to think of: *I don't count, and he*

*does.*" And she looked at Murray with an exquisite tenderness, a passion so unselfish, so genuine, that Frank's throat ached, and Harkness turned, if possible, paler. Murray was not, strictly speaking, a handsome man, but as he returned her glance then, he was beautiful.

"He's got genius, and I haven't," said Winny Davis. "If anybody ought to be happy, why, it should be Colin. But could I make him happy long enough to count? If I could!" cried Winny Davis, with an uplifted face.

"Love sacrifices!" cried Harkness hoarsely.

"Sacrifices what?" wondered Winny Davis. "And—does it pay, is it worth while, in the end?" And she looked at the green, forgotten graves. "Is one any the bettah? I wonder!"

Harkness struck his breast.

"The cross!" he cried. "The cross!"

"One can be damned upon the cross just as well as off it," said Winny Davis. "I'm findin' that out. That's why I'm heah—among the holy dead, with the husband of a livin' woman—and that woman not me."

Harkness gave an inarticulate cry. He could hardly bear to think that this was Winny Davis, speaking to him with her child's mouth, looking at him with her innocent eyes.

"It's such an old, old, *old* world," said Winny Davis. "And we're young in it such a little, little while! An' from the beginnin', folks have been strugglin' with just my problem. And now they're dead, and nobody remembahs any more. Maybe they don't remembah, themselves, whethah they were what folks called good or bad. Whethah they took theah own, and made their one love happy for a little while, or whethah they pushed it away and died broken-hearted, they're all dead togethah. And I'm wonderin'. Both ways—always—one loses. But which way does one lose the most?"

"When you take what is not yours," said Harkness flatly.

"But who's to say, except yo', what's yo's and what isn't? If somebody gets hold of somethin' that really belongs to yo', shall yo' let them keep it when yo' know it isn't theahs? Or shall yo' take your own when yo' find it?"

At that Francis Courtenay looked up.

"I should say it would depend altogether upon whether you happened to be Winny Davis Culpepper, from Alabama, from an old house where old gray ladies take old gray jackets out of trunks every now and then, and there's a picture of Lee in the parlor, and, say, a bale or two of Confederate paper money in the barn loft," said he.

"He needs me just because I am Winny Davis Culpeppah," said Winny Davis simply.

Frank had no answer to that. Mur-ray did need her because she was herself.

"Would he be really happy, though, do you think?" he wondered. "Many women before you, Winny Davis, have made the supreme sacrifice, and—it was shipwreck, my dear. The man never pays the price the woman is called upon to pay, remember."

"Oh, but that wasn't *Colin*!" said Winny Davis. "And—it may be just as well to come to shipwreck on the high seas, as to rot, rot slowly, at yo' moorin's, without eveh havin' known the waves and the wind."

"It's a devil of a puzzle," admitted Frank soberly.

"I know." She nodded. "That's why we came heah. We talked it ovah and ovah. And then we hit upon this plan: We'd stay undah the same roof, try to find each othah out, so to speak. No," she said with a proud glance, in return for Harkness' anguished one, "don't you dare to think evil of eithah of us! We're studyin' each othah—that's all. We're to give each othah a

fortnight, put each othah to the acid test of daily companionship, discover whethah we can be *friends*, as well as"—she flushed, hesitated, and added proudly, "lovahs. And if, at the end of that time, we can do without each othah for the rest of our lives, why, we will. An' if we can't—why, we can't. That's what we've got to find out."

The splendid, reckless youthfulness of the thing, as well as its piteous futility, made Frank blink and set Harkness raving.

"And I? Where do I come in?" cried Harkness, in a quivering and hoarse voice. He was not yet a saint out of the flesh, and a torturing human jealousy bit like a serpent.

"Ah, but I'm sorry, I'm sorry!" cried Winny Davis, looking at him with pity. "If you'd waited until to-morrow mawnin', yo'd have the lettah I mailed you to-day. I hated to have to tell yo' the truth, but I wanted to be honest. And yo're strong. I don't mean as much to you as I do to him."

Harkness gave a great cry.

"I love you!" he cried desolately. "I tell you, I love you! Winny Davis, for God's sake put by this horrible madness! You don't know what you have done to me!" cried Harkness.

"Nobody can do very much to yo', Henry," said she gently. "Yo're strong, strongah than just human love is. Yo've got a celibate soul, my deah, like the apostles had. Yo're for the mountaintops and the depths. Yo're for everybody, and I'd be just a little, little cornah of things."

"I love you! I love you!" said he, shaking.

"I'm sorry," said Winny Davis. "But I haven't got any feahs for yo'. Yo'll grow strongah and bettah, without me, just as well as with me. I'd nevah be really necessary to you. And that's what counts most, with women."

"This is final?"

"This is final."

"So be it. But I don't desire to save you for myself. I desire to save you for your own sake, Winny Davis."

"Can anybody do that but oneself?" she wondered.

"But I can't leave you here, alone, with—him!" Harkness almost screamed. "It's— Good God, can't you understand?"

Frank stood up.

"Murray," he addressed his whilom chief soberly, "I'm sorry, but he's right, you know. This thing is absurd, preposterous, and unjust. We can't stand for it, old man. I'm your friend, Murray, but this child's got decent folks down South, and the situation isn't fair to them, or to her. You understand?"

"I understand you're a bit of a nuisance. See here! This thing concerns Winny Davis and me—just us two alone." Murray spoke with careful patience. "It's nobody else's business."

"You're mistaken. It concerns Harkness and me, very nearly."

"So? Well, then, before you climb up into the judge's seat, suppose you and Harkness put yourself in my place. Suppose you take turn and turn about and supply my wife's wants, pay her bills, listen to her complaints, bear with her pettiness, until she drives you mad!" He looked at them with somber eyes. "And having done that," he finished, "then come and gabble to me about self-sacrifice, about giving up!"

"We didn't marry her, and you did. Having done so, you should at least abide by your bargain without bringing pain upon the innocent," said Harkness, like a whiplash.

"I do what I do with my eyes wide open," said Winny Davis proudly.

Murray disdained to answer Harkness. He looked, instead, at Frank. Frank reflected. Winny Davis needed neither him nor Harkness nor any other man just then—she needed woman help. And then before him rose the gravely beautiful face of all faces, strong and

sweet and serene. If anybody on earth could help Winny Davis, it would be Aurora Janeway.

"Harkness and I will get out," he said in answer to Murray's mute interrogation. "And—I'm going to ask Miss Aurora Janeway to come and stay here for a while." He looked at Winny Davis, with his friendly, direct smile. "She's the girl I'd choose for your best friend if you were my mother's daughter, Winny Davis," he said. "You'll like her."

"I'm suah I shall," said Winny Davis, undisturbed.

Murray's eyebrows drew together. He was chagrined, and disgusted with these men who had spoiled what might have been an idyllic and exquisite interlude, to which both he and Winny Davis might have looked back, as to a palmy oasis in the waste, in the days to come.

Harkness nodded assent. The theologian was in deep waters, in which he struggled drowningly. This whole episode was wrong, wild, impossible; yet he whose duty it was to convince these two mad creatures of the error of their course found himself dumb.

They walked back to Sweetfern Farm in the pleasant afternoon sunlight. Harkness dropped behind. His heart, a thing of lead, tired him inexpressibly. He was oppressed by the sorrow of the world. He knew that with Winny Davis something ineffably sweet and tender was going from him, something never to be replaced. The holier, higher reality remained, of course. But when a man had that, it set his feet upon the lonesome road. Tears ran down his face like November rain.

## CHAPTER XIII.

And in the meanwhile, the strike that the red-haired Jewess and Aurora Janeway had been long afraid of came. It was an ugly strike, and Miss Jane-



way was kept busy day and night. So were the police. And so, to his disgust, was Mr. Jordan Courtenay, who had to attend to many details that Miss Janeway had relieved him of, and found it very irksome.

This afternoon his car had been caught on the outskirts of the great crowd of strikers, sympathizers, picketers, scabs, policemen, and mere lookers-on. Every now and then, a policeman, prodigiously big, mowed his way ruthlessly through the packed mass and laid an imperative paw upon somebody's elbow. At which arose shrieks, groans, catcalls, hoots, jeers, cheers, while the mob danced on its outraged feet and shoved and jostled and snarled. And in the thick of things, large, lovely, serene, vividly distinct in the midst of a multitude, appeared Aurora Janeway. Courtenay was swept by a wave of anger. The woman was a member of *his* household! She had no business to be here!

He couldn't hear what she was saying, but a handful of would-be strike breakers joined the strikers, amid shouts. And then a policeman doggedly moved toward Miss Janeway and ordered her, not unkindly, to "move on."

Aurora moved on, shifting ground without changing her tactics. The policeman watched her reflectively. He knew Miss Janeway and the power she wielded, and he was wary of open conflict.

Behind Aurora buzzed another striking bee, so grotesque that the two formed the extremes of womanhood. Where that was logical, clear-headed, sane, this was a firebrand, as ugly as the other was beautiful. She was as noisy as a Ford, as quarrelsome as a choir meeting, and as safe as a keg of dynamite. When she pointed a skinny finger at some would-be scab and made comments upon the unlucky one's past, present, and probable future, the crowd

howled. Foreseeing trouble, the police began to close in upon her, in a narrowing blue cordon. But she was, it seemed, fluidic. She glided away like water. She slithered and turned and twisted, and was everywhere and nowhere, and could be heard from all points of the compass, piercingly.

The crowd, enjoying her, retarded the officers. Picketers and sympathizers got in their way. Strike breakers, enraged at telling taunts, rashly tried to hedge her in and were roughly jostled. Growls began to arise. All the while, grimly insistent, the policemen hung upon her heels.

There is that in the human breast that sympathizes with the hunted and desires to baffle the hunters. Jordan Courtenay showed the whites of his eyes at this raven croaking in the forum. She offended him by existing. Yet when he saw the man hunt loosed upon her, he was stirred to a disgusted pity.

It was a stormy moment. Both sides had been heckled, and both were chafing. Only such persons as Miss Janeway and members of her committees had been able to keep things peaceable. But trouble was brewing.

Of a sudden, a scab, stung by a telling taunt hurled in her teeth, leaped for the draggled green feather in the bony one's hat, all but scalping the wearer. The firebrand's fist caught the hat ravisher in the mouth. Instantly other fists came into play. There was a free-for-all shindy, with police whistles blowing for dance music. The unlovely lady bore the brunt of the battle. She was yanked hither by friends and jerked thither by foes, and always was she harried by the police, eluding their hands by the skin of her teeth and the elbows of her friends. She began to look like a Salvation Army rummage sale.

Jordan Courtenay had never before seen a woman mishandled, and he was filled with indignation and disgust. He

leaped from his car and fought his way by sheer force through the yelling mass until he reached her side and caught the beleaguered one by the elbow.

"Come with me. I'll get you out of this. My car is just around the corner," he said in her ear, and held on to her, while the two of them were jostled back and forth deliriously.

The woman looked up and saw a strange, well-dressed, powerfully built man, who proposed to carry her off in his car. She had a very poor opinion of men by and large, never having observed in their bearing toward herself anything that might soften her judgment. Also, she had read fatally often of the perils to which virtuous working girls are subject—from just such classy guys as this.

"Where was you wantin' me to go?" she jerked out.

"I'll take you home—to my own house—in my car," he jerked back.

"You will, will you?" She hooked a steely hand in the breast of his coat and screeched like a freight train on a down grade, a screech that all but stunned him. "Po-leece!" she screamed. "Help! I'm bein' took off by a white slaver! My Gawd, somebody come help me! I'm bein' drug away an' kidnaped! Somebody come save me!"

Her piercing voice permeated the great crowd. Every head turned.

"He's tryin' to git me away in his car! Wants me took to his house! Po-leece! Why don't them po-leece save a decent woman from a white slaver?"

That ominous word ran from lip to lip. Another woman screamed, and a man let fly an oath. The psychology of the mob is a curious one. They had been ripe for trouble of another sort, on another score, a minute since. Here was fresh material, which must needs be dealt with summarily. This smooth, sleek, well-fed, well-dressed stranger was seeking to carry off one of their

own women! As to why any man neither stone-blind nor raving mad should desire to carry her off, nobody gave a thought. Instead, somebody kindly knocked his hat off; a pair of thick-soled boots kicked him in the shins; a maul of a fist smote him in the ribs. Hands, clutching hands, clawed at him. Inflamed eyes glared.

Now for many months Mr. Jordan Courtenay had been nursing a mounting dissatisfaction. Of a sudden, it leaped up into a mad rage. He didn't want to help any more—he wanted to hurt!

He turned upon his assailants like a tiger. Just what happened in the next ten minutes he doesn't clearly remember, but the men he tackled remembered as long as they lived. It was a berserk outburst, a throwback to the fine old days when the English Church added to the Litany the petition to be delivered from the wrath of the Danes.

He moved forward like a tank. All of his superb new-found strength was exerted, and wherever his hard fist landed, blood flowed. In two minutes he was unrecognizable. His collar, a wilted rag, hung from his torn shirt by one button in the back; his coat had been literally torn off his back; his trousers looked as if they had been up against barbed-wire entanglements. He was the hot heart of the turmoil. And now tossed toward him, now tossed away, always screeching, was that nightmare of a woman! The sight of her maddened him. Two policemen went down like ninepins before the rest of the squad, red-faced and panting, surrounded him.

The struggle that ensued was short, but sweet. And it was touching to see the accuser of the brethren hurl herself upon the blue bosom of the law and bawl, with her throat of brass, that she'd druther die than be took off by a man old enough to know better, and her a respectable girl workin' for her livin'.

Other policemen came; the squad had been reinforced. Each man had two rioters, but six were detailed to the bemaused and tattered desperado who, it was asserted, had started the row. And the six had their hands full.

It was a slow passage through the crowd, which scowled and jostled and hurled insults in lieu of brickbats. All the way, silent, panting, Jordan Courtenay fought with bulldog obstinacy. The battle lust was upon him. Rage blinded, choked, deprived him of all power of speech, of clear thought, even.

Along with the woman, and some half score of battered rioters, Jordan Courtenay was eventually hustled—with difficulty—into a waiting patrol wagon. It was while he was being pushed, shoved, and hauled into this that Aurora Janeway caught one horrified glimpse of his face. Their eyes met for a second—hers full of amazed horror, his full of deadliest rage. He lifted his arm in a menacing, furious gesture. Had speech been his at that moment, he would have howled a curse at her. For he felt that it was she who had brought him to this. He went down again, suddenly, weighed by a policeman hanging onto either arm.

With clanging gongs, the wagon began to move away.

Aurora uttered a loud cry and tried, frantically, to force her way toward him. But for once she could make herself neither felt, heard, nor noticed. She, too, was shoved and jostled and buffeted. Her hat went; her hair swept loose from its restraining coils and flung itself free in a glittering cataract. At that the Valkyrie in the big, fair girl came to life. She used her shoulder to shove people aside ruthlessly. Somebody pulled her hair, and received in return as fine a punch in the eye as ever a college-bred fist delivered. A savage, sullen-looking woman snatched at her blouse, possibly for the neck chain she wore. Chain and blouse were

torn away; through rents one saw a shoulder whiter than Diana's. A red rage swept over the girl. Not for nothing had she pulled the best oar, tossed the best ball, been the swiftest and strongest in her class.

And then a hand was laid upon her arm. Aurora flung it off, but it came again, and stayed. The hand belonged to a perspiring, blue-coated person, fresh to the force, who didn't know Miss Aurora Janeway. Quickly he shoved her through the crowd, which fell back to make a passage for them.

The law had swooped upon Mr. Jordan Courtenay. Now it took up Miss Aurora Janeway.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

"Miss Janeway?" bleated Simmons. "No, Mr. Francis, you can't see her. She"—a fearful joy irradiated his countenance—"she's in jail. Likewise your uncle."

"Simmons!" said the young man sternly.—"At your time of life—"

"In jail!" singsonged Simmons. "Headquarters phoned. Miss Janeway! For rioting! And a crook that claims to be your uncle—and that is your uncle, Mr. Francis—for attempted white slaving, beating up officers in the discharge of their duties, and cleaning out headquarters when they got him there!"

Frank dashed for the telephone.

"Yes," said the desk sergeant. "It was a mistake about Miss Janeway. Corrigan didn't know her, him being new to the force. We got a doctor with her now. She'd got such hysterics we couldn't get anything out of her."

"And my uncle?"

"The fella says he's Mr. Jordan Courtenay, but he's no more him than the babe unborn. 'Tain't likely Mr. Jordan Courtenay'd behave like a tiger and a devil and a German rolled in one,

is it? That's what this fella done. should think we'd know a crook when we see one, an' this fella'll be wanted somewheres for murder or robbery or dynamitin', or something like that. But if you'd come for Miss Janeway, sir, we'd be glad."

Miss Janeway had twisted her glorious hair up, and the matron had managed to sew the torn blouse together. The girl's eyes were red, her nose pink, yet she was, to Frank's eyes, the fairest of women. She sighed deeply at sight of him, and became, if not calm, at least coherent. She clung to his hand while she talked, and looked into his face as a woman looks only at the man she adores.

She *hadn't* been rioting. But she had seen Mr. Jordan Courtenay set upon—she didn't know why. She had tried to reach him, to make the police understand. And she herself had been handled as if she'd been a malefactor! People had pulled her hair. Her lips quivered. But she wanted to know, indignantly, what the police had done with Mr. Jordan Courtenay.

The men at headquarters looked at each other uneasily. Suppose that raging devil it had taken an entire squad to get into a cell were really Jordan Courtenay, after all!

It was hard for Frank to realize that the wreck he faced a few minutes later was really his uncle. He was all but naked; he was unrecognizable; he looked like a formidable tramp who has been kicked off a freight by a big-footed trainman, rolled down a briery hill, and landed in a refuse heap.

A smile of cold, deadly joy wreathed his swollen lips at sight of Miss Janeway. She had been mauled a bit, too, eh? Had her hair pulled, thank God? He wished he knew who had pulled Aurora's hair, that he might give that person a fitting reward. Also, it was his intention to break the entire police department into very small pieces, be-

ginning with the commissioner and ending with the last recruit! Also, to catch the woman who had brought her absurd charges against him, and *boil* her!

He had little to say to the subdued officers, except to express bitter regret that he had only crippled two, instead of killing the entire squad outright. He didn't even thank his nephew for arranging matters so that he could go home at once, instead of having to spend the night in jail. They let him use the telephone, at his curt request, but instead of ringing up his own house, he called a number that made Frank start and stare, for it was Dolly Tredegar's.

"Sorry I can't keep my appointment to-night, Dots. Eh? Oh, I've been arrested. All right, laugh! No. I ran up against some of Aurora's friends, and one of 'em had me arrested for trying to kidnap her. White slaving, Dots! *Me!* Lord, no! Uglier than homemade sin and a gorilla. Miss Janeway? She's here, too. Rioting. Eh, what? Well, I don't see why you should be so upset! She can take care of herself! Coming to the house? Tomorrow morning? Dots, anything you say goes, of course. All right. Good-by, dear."

The precinct captain felt grateful to young Mr. Frank Courtenay for arriving on the scene ahead of inquisitive reporters, who would have made a fearful thing of this affair. He didn't breathe easy until he saw his distinguished prisoners out of his charge and into a taxi.

They were a silent trio. Mr. Jordan Courtenay understood that his career as a reformer and an uplifter was finished and done with—and he was damned glad of it! He was deathly sick of the whole business. In future, he would be kind to any one he thought needed it, whenever he got the chance. But the Courtenay-Janeway Association was dissolved automatically. He

felt as if he had taken off tight shoes. From now on, life was going to be pleasant.

He stalked into his house, an awful object for servants with delicate nerves and aristocratic sensibilities. Before he gave himself into the hands of his new Swedish valet, who could work wonders with a gentleman's personal appearance, he said to Frank curtly:

"If you'll come here to-morrow morning, when I can have a talk with you, Frank, you will greatly oblige me. Eleven o'clock, please."

Frank considered. He wanted to talk with Miss Janeway about Winny Davis, and the sooner, the better. Miss Janeway herself settled the matter by coming out of a deep brown study and saying pleadingly:

"Please, Mr. Courtenay! I have something to say to you, too."

Frank went away wondering. Life pressed hard upon his shoulders just then. Murray, Winny Davis, Aurora herself, Harkness, the change in his uncle, his own prospects, and a new stern duty that he and Harkness knew they must face—all weighed heavily upon him and prevented him from sleeping soundly.

The Swedish valet deserved his recommendations, for by the next morning he had, as by magic, removed all trace of yesterday's rough encounter from Mr. Jordan Courtenay's outer man. He showed up magnificently beside Frank, who was pale and a bit careworn. While they were shaking hands, Dolly Tredegar came in with Aurora, whom she was gently upbraiding for having risked herself in a mob of striking workers.

Dolly's presence in that house, and his uncle's enraptured and open delight in it, quickened Frank's chastened irony. His old smile crept to his lip. Catching Dolly's eye, he winked at her swiftly.

"Mr. Francis Courtenay," said Au-

rora Janeway earnestly, "I've wanted for some time to say to you what I'm going to say now. I came to this house under a very serious misapprehension as to your real character. You—you are not at all what I stupidly supposed you to be, Mr. Courtenay, and I apologize for my error. I didn't know that your uncle had misjudged you. I don't accuse him of deliberately doing so, but he did misjudge you—as much as"—here she turned her gray eyes upon Mr. Jordan's wrathful and astonished face—"he has misjudged me. The longer I live under the same roof with him, the more clearly I see how utterly wrong he ~~was~~ is, the less I admire his mind, his methods, and himself!" Her cheek flushed, her eyes sparkled. She was unjust, humanly unjust, and for the first time Jordan Courtenay had a genuine liking for her.

"My mind, my methods, and myself are human!" he snapped. "Yours are not. You're a—a—a dashed archangel—that's what ails you! No mortal man can live with a female archangel and keep his temper!"

Miss Tredegar watched the two with narrowed, naughty eyes.

"You couldn't live with anybody and keep your temper. But you don't have to try, so far as I am concerned. I am leaving your house," said Aurora, frigidly. "I shall pursue my work in my own way, unhampered by you—"

"And get your hair pulled for your pains!" said he. "And serves you jolly well right!"

"That was entirely your fault."

"My fault?" he roared. "Why—why—"

"Certainly, your fault! How was the girl to know better? She judged you entirely by your personal appearance!" Aurora was *not* an archangel!

"Do I look like a scoundrel?"

"You most certainly do not look like a philanthropist!"

Here Dolly Tredegar laughed.

"You're ridiculous, the pair of you!" said Dolly gayly. "Though Miss Janeway's quite right about your not resembling the usual cut-and-dried helper of strikers in distress, Jordan. You're far, far too good looking! There's even a suspicion of *diablerie* about you, my friend! No wonder that poor woman thought you dangerous. She must really be an early-Christian-martyr sort not to have fallen for you at sight. I'd like to see that woman with my own eyes, to convince myself she's real!"

"She's real, hellishly real! Though she looks more like a hobgoblin!" he snorted.

"Oh, well, the experience hasn't hurt you any," said Dolly coolly. "It has helped you to find yourself."

"I found myself the day I found you, Dots," said Jordan Courtenay, with real humility.

Frank stood up. He looked admiringly, gratefully, at Aurora Janeway. To know that she thought well of him was priceless, but he had to tell the truth.

"I— It's awfully good of you, Miss Janeway—but Uncle Jord *wasn't* so far wrong about me, you know. He really didn't do me any injustice at all."

"He did!" said Aurora indignantly. "Why, he said you——" She stopped, confusedly. "And you're not!" she finished hotly. "Why, you're one of the best men in the world!"

"She's right, Frank. You *have* got the angelic temperament, my poor fellow," said his uncle commiseratingly. "However, I did do you an injustice, boy. You—were quite right about—certain of your friends." And he flushed darkly.

"Meaning me, Frank," said Dolly equably. "Don't look so miserable, Jordan. You've made up."

"And, my dear boy, if you'll come back, we'll let bygones be bygones, and everything will be all right. You can

keep on with your work with Murray. It's a gentleman's calling. One can go far as an architect, with proper backing. And you can resume your rightful place in society. You owe it to your name, Frank."

Frank's eyes went to Miss Aurora Janeway.

"Miss Janeway will lose nothing by having been associated with me for a while," said Jordan Courtenay. "I shall settle a fixed income upon her. Also, I shall place what I shall call the Courtenay Foundation at her disposal. She will overlook all disbursements. All I ask is that she take the entire responsibility and leave me free of it!"

"No," said Aurora. "I am going back to my own place. I am going to live my own life, and I shall give *myself* to my work. Money isn't the principal thing, even in charity."

"What? You won't take charge of the foundation?"

"No," said Aurora, lifting her clear eyes. "You must assume your own responsibilities."

He shook his head over her obstinacy. Then he turned to his nephew.

"When are you coming back, nephew?"

But Frank shook his head. Leave Harkness? Get out of touch of all those empty hands outstretched to him? Come up into ease, out of the depths where the saviors, the forerunners, of the race sweat and labor? Lose that—for this?

"You're a brick, Uncle Jord," he said warmly. "Honest, I like you now better than I ever did. But I've found my job—and it's not here."

"I told you he had the angelic temperament!" wailed Jordan Courtenay.

"Oh, you glorious idiots!" shrilled Dolly Tredegar joyfully. "As God made you, He matched you! Aurora Janeway, you make me glad I'm alive and a woman! Frank, you make me proud I'm marrying into your family!



Because I'm going to marry Jordan, you know. To cure him of being too much in love with me!" And, with suddenly wet eyes, she laughed into their astonished faces. "Now will you two get out, while I talk business with him? Somebody's got to think for all of you, and it might as well be me."

They went out together, each thrillingly conscious of the other's nearness. They knew that they loved each other—and the barriers of the Courtenay millions had been thrown down, and they were free, and face to face!

He told her, then, about Winny Davis, and enlisted her instant sympathy. She had met Murray's wife and others just like her. She was sorry for the man, and for the woman who really loved him. She would go that afternoon, and Mary McKinstry would go with her. Besides, she herself needed just such a rest.

Winny Davis loved her at sight. This big, fair, sane woman soothed the girl who was struggling with the problem of her life, and she felt that in Aurora Janeway she had found the perfect friend. Murray was not resentful of her presence; her classic beauty enraptured him—and she was so wisely unobtrusive.

Back in town, Frank and Harkness found their days full to overflowing. Harkness had decided upon his course, and Frank stood by him. It was on the forenoon of the seventh day that the telegram came for Murray. Frank opened and read it; then sat for a long time as if turned to stone. Mrs. Murray, on one of her interminable visits, had been killed in an automobile wreck.

He dared not feel glad; one must be a brute to be glad because a poor little fool of a woman has been hurtled out of life. He felt, instead, solemn, but not sorry. Then he reached for his hat and ran for the first train that would take him to Murray.

The architect sank in a limp heap

when he read the message. He twisted the yellow slip around and around in his shaking fingers.

"Frank!" he whispered. "I was going—to end things. A bullet in the brain—when Winny Davis went away, you know, with Aurora Janeway. It isn't that she doesn't love me. She does. But she was going, Frank. Out of my life. She said if we were worth while, we'd give each other up, and if we weren't worth while, we didn't deserve each other! I—I couldn't urge her, you know. But when she'd gone, Frank, I was going, too. And this—and this— Poor thing, poor thing!" Down went his head, and he wept, for the dead woman and himself.

Winny Davis stole in, and knelt beside him, and held his hands to her breast. She looked up at him with her sweet and tender eyes that were like the eyes of that guardian angel the Catholic Church allots to each mortal. He drew her closer.

"Winny Davis! You don't know how close I was—to the pit, my love! Oh, I believe in God, I believe in God!"

Out in the golden afternoon, Frank Courtenay walked with Aurora Janeway. They had very little to say. It wasn't that they were shy of each other, but that they were sure.

"Aurora Janeway," he said, after a long pause, "do you think you would like to marry a private soldier in your Uncle Sam's army?"

"It would depend," said she, "upon the soldier. Why?"

"Because," he said quietly, "Henry Harkness and I have enlisted as privates, for overseas duty."

"Why not the officers' training camp?" she wondered. And she turned very pale. The terror of the world reached out and touched her on the shoulder, for this was her man.

"Why didn't you stay in Uncle Jord's house and boss his foundation?" he asked shrewdly.

"Because I think I can do better work elsewhere."

"That's what Harkness and I thought; so we sent in our names. We had to, you know."

Aurora's hands crept to her heart, which seemed to have stopped beating. But she lifted her gray eyes and said bravely:

"Yes. It's right."

"I knew you'd understand!" he exclaimed. "Aurora—dawn woman—you know I love you! More than I can say! And you love me, too, Aurora. So when we get this business settled, and I come home, I'm going to ask you to marry me."

Her rebellious hair blew into her eyes, and she put up her hand to smooth it. Two large tears stole down her cheeks, but at the same time, that unexpected dimple came out.

"When I was at college," said she musingly, "we had the motto madness. One of my chums gave me one to hang over my desk. It was a very good motto. I believe," said she, turning her beautiful eyes full upon him, "that it's the best motto in the world to live up to."

"What is it?" asked Frank.

She moved a fraction of an inch nearer.

"*Do It Now*," said Aurora Janeway.



## PIERROT THE CONJURER

PIERROT can lift a moonbeam,  
Or put a sorrow by,  
And heave a hope as lightly  
As goblins do a sigh.  
*Heigh-ho!*  
*A hope as lightly*  
*As goblins do a sigh.*

Was ever oaf so agile  
At doing little more  
Than shift an airy burden  
And hurry by the door?  
*Heigh-ho!*  
*An airy burden,*  
*And hurry by the door.*

Who else could cast a shadow  
Quite so grotesquely tall,  
Or place a spell of beauty  
On nothing much at all?  
*Heigh-ho!*  
*A spell of beauty*  
*On nothing much at all.*

WILLIAM GRIFFITH.



# The Girl From Hibbsville

By Arthur Crabb

Author of "Eyes," "The Lottery," etc.



TWO men faced each other across a large mahogany table, in a large room. The man sitting was the elder. His face showed the unscrupulous fighter—a man who ruled by might and cared little for the right or righteousness, a man trained in a coarse, hard world, who cared little for its refinements.

The face of the younger showed no lack of courage, and it showed breeding. His eyes were large and set far apart, as the other man's were not; his forehead was high, and his mouth, though strong, showed that there was something of kindness in him, which there was not in the older man.

The younger man spoke.

"You win, you cur, but it'll be the most costly victory you ever won—remember that! Some day you'll pay!"

The other man laughed a mirthless laugh.

"I'm used to that sort of talk," he said, "and that's all it ever is—talk."

The younger man's hands closed. Their eyes met, and both knew that there was everlasting enmity between them. The younger man turned and walked from the room. As the door closed behind him, the older man shrugged his shoulders and grunted. There was a suspicion of displeasure in the gesture. There was something in this man that had not been in the others whom he had fought and beaten.

It was a glorious June day. The time was hardly ten o'clock. Ellis Butler stopped his car near the entrance of the great railroad station, and walked to the telegraph office, where he received a telegram. He read it, reread it, and then tore it up, dropping the pieces slowly into a receptacle for trash. His friend could not come, and Ellis had nothing to do. The world was blank, the future an arid waste. His job was gone, which was of no importance financially, and his journey north with Purvis was not to be, as explained in the telegram.

He had no family. His friends were mostly far away. Therefore, he would go to New York and see what there was to see. His trunk was packed and on the rack behind his automobile. He walked across the waiting room toward the door.

The girl was standing perhaps a dozen feet from it. There were a great many people about, but she stood out from the throng. She was much too well dressed to attract attention by flashiness; he probably noticed her simply because she was a lady alone in a rough crowd. As he passed her, he looked at her, and she smiled. Butler bowed, trying to hide his embarrassment at not recognizing her.

Her smile and his acknowledgment did not satisfy her. She walked to him, dangling her purse by its chain.

"Hello! Come with me?" she said, hardly above a whisper.

Butler was taken completely by surprise. Handsome as she was, her good looks were not the sort that usually go with that kind of thing, but were the beauty of health and wholesomeness. Everything about her appearance bespoke a lady. But—there she was, denying her perfection. His first sensation was sympathy; she was some poor girl who deserved better things, a girl designed for much better things. He was sorry for her.

"Come," she whispered again.

"No, thanks, not this morning," he said and walked on. He saw disappointment on her face as he left her.

He went to his car and got in, but instead of putting his mind on the starting of it, he sat motionless. The girl's face was staring into his as if a picture of her were painted on the wind shield. He sat there for some moments, his jaws shut tight, his eyes half closed, his lips twisting.

Then he went back to the station. She was walking slowly toward the train gates, and he had no trouble catching up with her. When she saw him, she smiled again.

"Come with me," he said.

She walked at his side to the door.

"Where do you want to go?" she asked.

"Come take a ride with me, anywhere. I want to talk to you. I'll pay you for your time."

"I don't understand. What's the—er—game?"

"There's no game. I just want some one to ride with. I'll pay you five dollars an hour, in advance."

The girl hesitated. Then:

"All right, I'll take a chance," she said.

Butler had told her that he simply wanted her to ride with him, but when he had her beside him in his car, he had no idea what to do with her. Curiosity

had sent him back to her; he had wanted to reconcile the girl's appearance with her profession. She was strikingly handsome, but many women like her were that. The question lay elsewhere. Her face showed unmistakable signs of good breeding, but, stranger than that, there were innocence and modesty all over it. Her words to him had been full of embarrassment, her manner timorous. Her body was the soft, supple body of untainted youth, and it was tastefully and simply clothed.

But when he had her with him, his curiosity vanished. His reason came to his rescue and told him that the girl's exterior was simply another proof of the mystifying complexity of the sex; she was blessed with a veneer valuable to her, but highly deceiving.

He did not speak to her till they were out of the heavy traffic. Then, when he could take his eyes momentarily from the road ahead, he saw her turned toward him in her seat, looking steadfastly at him, half fearfully, half hopefully.

Butler wondered what sort of hope she had. He spoke to her, and she answered in a clear, low, soft voice. Her English was beyond reasonable criticism.

"I'm nineteen," she said.

Butler believed that she told him the truth in answer to his question.

"I'm nearly twice as old as you," he said.

"Twice nine are eighteen, twice one are two, and one are three. Thirty-eight. Aren't you an old, old man!" By this time she was amusing herself.

He took her to lunch at a place fifty miles away. She knew how to behave at a hotel table and chose a simple lunch from the elaborate menu. She refused his offer of something to drink.

At sunset they were on a hillside, standing side by side. The view of the valley below was fine, and she spoke of

it appreciatively, without effusiveness or exaggeration.

But his eyes were on *her*. He was a lonely man, a man with no ties and few friendships east of the Rockies. He had worked hard for many years, and his work was over. He had looked forward to a whole summer with Purvis, and Purvis had disappointed him. Then this choice, paradoxical morsel had unexpectedly been set before him.

He took the girl's hand in his. At his touch, she moved from him, apparently subconsciously, and then suddenly relaxed and let her hand stay in his, her eyes still on the valley below. He put his arm around her, and she attempted, gently, to draw away from him. Then he felt a tremor pass through her body, and again she relaxed. She turned to meet him fairly, her face upturned to his. Her eyes were closed, her head fell back, her lips trembled, and she melted into his arms, her body, warm and luxurious, meeting every curve of his.

The sun was setting, and they were still on the hillside.

"But I have no clothes," she said.

"Then you must get some. You know what you'll need—white things for quiet days, rough things for roughing it. What you can't get here we can pick up on the way. There's no question of money. There's plenty."

"And how long will it last?"

"Till October—perhaps longer. I make no promises, except that I'll take good care of you, and when I go away, I'll—"

He hesitated. What would he do when he went away?

"I understand," she said. "I want no promises."

His eyes almost closed as the words struck home. Of course she deserved no promises, but he was nearly twice as old as she.

"I'll get you a trunk," he said, "that

we can strap on the car, and a bag or two that'll go in the tonneau with mine. You understand that for most of the time you'll live in the open, and that you'll have lots of hard work and few luxuries. It'll require lots of strength."

"I'm healthy and strong. I shall love it."

Before he left her that night at the house where she had a room, he held some bills toward her. Her eyes opened in amazement.

"It's too much," she said.

"Perhaps it's more than you'll need to-morrow, but you'll be able to use it eventually."

"But I don't want so much now. I'm here alone. Won't you give it to me in the morning, part of it?"

"As you will. I have nothing to do to-morrow. I'll come for you at nine o'clock. Can you get ready in one day, so that we can leave early the next morning?"

"Yes, I will go—with you—when-ever you wish."

Late the next afternoon, her purchases were made, and he took her to dinner. Afterward, she gave back to him the money that she had not spent. He was surprised that it was so much.

"But I don't want to waste your money, no matter how much you have. If I don't dress well enough to please you, then I'll spend more, but I'd much rather you kept it in the meantime. I might lose it."

The next morning, he went for her and found her waiting with her trunk and bags beside her on the steps. No lady of the purest ray could have looked better. Butler, used as he already was to her simplicity and gentleness, her appearance of innocence, her sweetness, and her evidence of refinement, was surprised again. For a moment he felt like a cur, as if he were leading a pure maiden into iniquity. Then he remembered that "Come with me?" at the station.

He arranged her baggage, and she sat down beside him, and they started on their way northward. They had not gone far when he saw that she had turned in her seat and, ignoring the country about her, had fixed her eyes on his face. He smiled at her.

"You're not sorry that you're going with me, are you, Jeannette?"

She shook her head.

"No, I'm very glad. If I weren't, I wouldn't go. I like you very much." For a moment she was silent, her eyes wandering over the road ahead. Then she said, "Am I to be Mrs. Butler—for the summer?"

"Yes, of course, unless you prefer some other name."

"Not unless you wish it. And may I wear this?" She held up her hand and showed him the plain gold ring on her finger.

"Yes, of course. I should have thought of it myself."

Her hand, with the ring, slipped along his sleeve to his hand on the steering wheel and pressed it gently. It was a very expressive action.

"You're a wonderful man, Ellis," she whispered.

As it happened, he was a wonderful man, but that was just her good luck. She would undoubtedly have gone with any man who offered her what he had offered.

They went slowly northward, passing Lake George and Lake Champlain, living as tourists live, finding shelter at the end of the day, and sometimes staying a day or two in an especially attractive place. Then they went eastward, and for a month lived on the coast of Maine, sailing, fishing, walking, driving, almost always alone. Then they went west and north and disappeared in the boundless forests of Canada, and for two months lived the life of the wilds, alone.

The girl reveled in it. Her health and strength were no idle boast. Never

once did she falter, but thrived, and the health that had been in her blossomed forth, increasing her beauty, lending grace to her body, and driving lassitude from her eyes. Her smile was like burnished gold flashing in the sunlight; her laughter, which had been mirthless in those first two days, became rippling merriment.

She laughed at Ellis, called him a bear, made fun of his calmness, and taunted him into much speech, which was not his custom. She loved him and made light of his show of affection, because it was too dignified. She was beautiful; when she stood shining white against the dark background of the forest, ready to plunge into the cold waters of a lake, he believed that nature had outdone itself when it had molded her. And always there was gentleness about her and clean talk and sweetness.

She told him part of her story. She had been born in Wisconsin, the daughter of a minister, and had moved hither and thither, always poor and almost always unhappy. When she was twelve, they had gone to Hibbsville. There is a road that runs for many a mile between two small cities; along it, halfway between them, a narrow dirt road leaves the hard, wide road. At the corner is an old, faded sign, a narrow board nailed to a rotting post, which reads: "Hibbsville 8½ M." That was nearly all that the world knew of Hibbsville, and Hibbsville knew little of the world. It had two stores, a hotel that had long since lost all hope of guests, a battered and pathetic schoolhouse, and her father's church. The railroad was six miles away, with a station that was a shed where a train or two stopped when flagged, and a siding for two or three freight cars. About Hibbsville were farms with farmers who spoke little English, thought much of God, and had no real morality or devotion.



Her father had been the trouble. She had begun to understand him about the time he took her to Hibbsville. He was a narrow, merciless, dogmatic man, who, once upon a time, had had a vision and had lived on it ever after. When he had gone to Hibbsville, he had known that he was a failure and had tried to hide the fact under talk of being a humble servant of the Almighty.

Her mother had married him in the heyday of his youthful vision—blind to his narrowness of mind. She had never complained, but had kept the promise she had made at the altar. She had been of a good family, educated and intelligent, and had given her children all she had to give.

But in her daughter Jeannette her giving and the father's rigid lack of charity had stirred resentment. The girl, far brighter than her brothers and sisters, had resented her seclusion, the everlasting struggle to keep body and soul together, the endless days of monotony, the hopelessness of her life, the futility of existence in Hibbsville. By the time she was fifteen, there had been an open feud between her and her father. When she was eighteen, he had found himself weakening against her attacks and had called God to his aid against her. She had laughed at him and his God, had told him that there was no God, and he had turned her from his house. She had gone willingly, laughing at him.

She told Ellis the story without resentment, and with no malice.

"When I left home," she said, "I didn't know whether there was a God or not. Within a year I knew that there was no God. Then I found you."

"Is there a God now?" he asked her.

"I'm not sure, but I think perhaps there is."

They came back to civilization the first of October, and reveled in it.

Porcelain tubs, hot water, fancy food, white sheets were pleasant after the dark water of the north, game killed and vegetables in cans and blankets on hemlock boughs.

Ellis was proud of his woman. Her clear eyes, her skin smooth as velvet and tanned by her long exposure, the dignity of her bearing, her grace, her beauty, her glorious hair filled him with pride, for she was his woman. All that long summer she had watched him, studying him and his ways, asking questions. The girl from Hibbsville had been born a lady, but she had not been trained as a lady. During her year alone, she had, perhaps as a side issue, for amusement, studied the manners of ladies when she had had the opportunity. She had chosen good models and learned quickly, taking on their graces superficially. With Ellis, she had come into her own—a fine imitation of what she really might have been if that year could have been wiped from the slate.

Still in Canada, he made her buy a winter wardrobe. Only the best and plenty of it would do. Her furs were wonderful to behold, her suits and evening frocks, ever simple, were, as always with her, in fine taste. That had been born in her and never lost.

As he watched her, talked to her, over and over in his mind ran the thought:

"I found her in the gutter, and see what I have made of her!"

And then would flash the question: "What have I made of her?"

He tried to put it aside, and succeeded for a few short days. He reclaimed his car and took a month to drive to New York. The October days were fine; he had no work, no responsibilities; he could go on as he was for as long as he liked. But he could not go on forever. The call of the world of men sounded clear. He had made his fortune and then had under-

taken a new task and failed, but failure was not a word he knew. He had been beaten, but not forever. He must go back and win.

But going back meant giving up Jeanette. He could not take her with him. There was the alternative of a clandestine arrangement—many men had that—but he revolted at it. He and she had faced the world together, and they would face it side by side openly or—

Of course it was very simple. He would go his way and she hers; it would be better so. He would provide for her.

They reached New York, and she was thrilled. For a week she drank in the immenseness of it, its overwhelming gayety, its fuss and feathers, its show and pretension, and then its glamour dulled.

They dined in bizarre palaces, went to play after play; they even danced. At the end of the week, she had had enough. Returning after midnight to their rooms, she dropped her cloak from her shoulders wearily.

"Oh, Ellis," she cried, "isn't it awful? Do you like it? Don't you long to be back in the woods, under the sky, with the birds and the fish and the animals, the big ones and the little ones, away from everything but just you and—"

She stopped as if she had been struck. He was sitting in a chair under a table lamp and was looking hard at her. His face was as she had never seen it before. Neither he nor she spoke, but each gazed into the other's eyes. Then suddenly, as comprehension came to her, her body trembled, her breast fell inward as if its support were gone, her eyes slowly closed and her head sank slowly forward, her color fled and she was deathly white. Ellis sat waiting; he did not know what to say to her.

Suddenly life came back to her. She threw her head back and stood straight before him. Then she smiled and

slipped to the floor beside him, taking his hands in hers.

"There, there, Ellis!" she whispered. "Don't be sad. I understand. You promised me a summer of something—I hardly knew what. I asked for no promises. And you've given me months of wonderful happiness. I've had enough to last me all my life. I knew that the end must come. I've known that it must come soon. I'll go away and take my happiness with me."

He had taken her head in his hands, and she was between his knees.

"I'll provide for you," he said. "You'll have plenty of money to live on comfortably. Perhaps we shall be friends."

"That's very sweet of you, Ellis. I'm not surprised. It's like you. But it can't be. While I'm with you as—as your wife—of course I let you treat me as if I really were your wife, but when I'm gone, I can't let you—help me—that way. And I'm sure that we could never be friends."

This was the woman that he had found in the gutter. There were no heroics in her voice; it was low, and her words were spoken with inflections that he had taught her for their amusement. He, speaking in public, had studied so that he might speak well, and it was a hobby of his to train his voice. He sang well, too. So, during the long evenings, he had taught her, both of them laughing. Now she had a voice that made people stop to listen to it, not to what she was saying, and she had spoken to him perfectly naturally in that voice, for it had become a part of her.

But what was he to do with her? She was a good friend, he was very fond of her, and she was like a little child who must be kept from harm. He, holding her face up to him, gazed down at her. Finally he said:

"Let's don't talk about it, let's don't

think of it now, Jean. There's time enough for that."

A week later, they went to dine at a restaurant that was famous and that drew men of all sorts and descriptions except poor ones. Butler, ever in awe of the woman he had created from next to nothing, watched her especially closely that night, as she gave her cloak to the maid and walked slowly to the table that they had reserved. She seemed to see no one; she was oblivious of the eyes turned on her and the conversations that suddenly stopped as she passed. No word describes her, no word combines beauty and grace, modesty and gentleness, intelligence and dignity.

Butler was in awe of her as never before. If she had only been a different sort of woman when he had found her!

They had hardly begun dinner when the thing happened. Four men came to a table near them, and one of them was his enemy, the great man, if one is willing to call power greatness. He was facing Jeannette, but Butler could see him easily enough.

At that instant the curtain fell, the game was finished, and life, serious life, began again for Butler. There was work for him to do; the time for play was over. The question must be answered without more delay. He must find out what to do with Jean.

The great man hardly took his eyes from her during the hour that they were there. He was notoriously fond of women. He ignored Butler.

Jean noticed the change in Ellis, and it required all her tact and self-control to get through that hour. She knew that, beneath the surface of the man who had been calm and quiet, happy-go-lucky, droll, and very kind to her, there was a fighter, a man of tremendous force, a man who could hate and love as few men can. Her man had

gone and the real man come. Jean knew that the end was close at hand.

She was no coward. She had gone alone into the world once before, and she would go again. She had had in those few months all the happiness one girl deserves in this life.

His mood did not change. For two days she saw only the new man, and waited. It was hard work waiting in silence.

During the third day, he met a man, seemingly by chance, and talked to him and went back to Jean. There was nothing of the lover in him.

"Do you remember the man who stared at you so hard Tuesday night?"

"Yes."

"He wants to meet you."

"Does he?"

"Yes. I think he sent a man to see me to-day, to find out about you. I lied to the man. Do you want to meet him?"

"He's a very great man, isn't he?"

"I suppose he is. The world thinks so."

She said nothing to that, and he asked the question again. It was, of course, the end; she must understand that.

"Do you want me to?"

"Yes, I do. I lied to the man. I'll tell you about that later. I want you to meet him and marry him. You can do it, but it must— No, I can't say 'must'—but I want you to promise me that it will be marriage or nothing."

She consented. It was as good a way of going away from him as any. She did not complain, and when things were arranged, she left him. It was quite simple—an elderly woman companion—"Aunt Sophy"—an apartment, and a plausible story of the past, not too definite.

The great man approached, looked over the ground, made his usual experiments, and was surprised. His experiments showed that the young

woman was either extremely innocent or very wise. At the end of a month, he was convinced that she was neither, but that she was, instead, a remarkably gifted and beautiful young woman, most annoying in her simplicity, most charming in her deportment, and most desirable in all ways. Old men have made fools of themselves before.

She, personally, was, of course, a thing of the past so far as Butler was concerned. Now she was a means to an end. He had found her on the lowest level of society, had taken her for a plaything, and had found it pleasant to polish and improve his toy in divers ways. If she had not been what she was, he would have made her into something besides a toy, but of course that was impossible. His only regret was that it was impossible.

He went his way laughing. She had promised that she would be the great man's wife or nothing, and the woman who watched over her reported to Butler. He knew just what was going on—how innocence and guilelessness, gentleness, breeding, and youth were breaking down the great man's powers of resistance, how the prize was every day becoming more alluring because it was hard to win.

Butler laughed. He had never thought of such a revenge as this, but what revenge could be half so sweet, what victory half so glorious? The man who was great in the eyes of the world, but who was nothing more than an unscrupulous, crooked, cunning criminal in the eyes of Butler, had beaten him in the great fight because he had been crooked. To break him, to take away his power, to disgrace him, had been Butler's vow, but there had come to his hand a more subtle, more cruel revenge than that. He should marry Jean.

The wiser a man is in the ways of the world, the more value he places on the purity of his home. Let him

marry Jean and the world would roar at him when the world knew what he had done, and the world would know soon enough.

And Jean? Of course it was too bad that it had to be Jean, but she would lose nothing more than she had already lost. She had chosen her own path, and she would be well provided for.

Butler laughed, for day after day word came to him that all was going well. Then one night, when he was dining with another man, she and the great man and the duenna came into the dining room and passed him. She saw him, and for just an instant her eyes met his. There was no reproach in them, no sign of complaint. But there was something else in them that came unbidden and, having come, was quickly driven away.

Butler finished his dinner hurriedly and went out into the cold air. He walked up Fifth Avenue and along the Park, on and on.

He forgot her beauty; he forgot her body, with its wonderful curves, its softness, and its satiny skin; he forgot her shame; he forgot her voice, her laughter, her wit; he forgot the physical woman; he forgot that she had no God. He forgot the world, he forgot his future and his revenge, he forgot himself. He was alone in the world with a soul that had been put into his keeping.

Don't worry as to whether or not Ellis Butler was a good, bad, or indifferent man; believe that, so far as courage, mentality, and intellect go, he was a remarkable man, and let it go at that. His code was a better code by far than the great man's, and, given half a chance, his heart would have been a heart to be proud of.

For a week he accomplished nothing. He sat for hours doing nothing, his head dropped forward, his eyes closed, his hands clenched. He walked alone,

in fair weather and foul, trying to solve the problem.

What should he do with her? He had thought that the problem had been solved, but when he had seen her eyes that night, he had known that he had misunderstood the problem, and that it would take more solving than he had ever dreamed of.

At the end of the week, the time came to decide. His faithful servant sent him word that on the next night the great man would come for his answer. He had been put off and off; he was like a wild man, crazy for the girl; he had forgotten everything but her; he was lavishing presents on her, he was dancing attendance on her every moment, and his infatuation was complete.

For a night and a day, Butler was in hell. His scheme had been good enough; he could inflict no more devilish torture on his enemy than to have him marry a woman who had been any man's woman. But now, when the thing was about to be consummated, there was another side to it, and the other side was Jean. To explain to the world what the great man had done meant trampling Jean underfoot. It was a struggle between hate and pity.

Pity won. He went to her late in the afternoon of the day that was to decide the great man's fate. She was sitting by a lamp, reading, and did not rise when Butler entered. He had seen her only once since he had sent her away, and that was the night when he had seen what was in her eyes as she had passed him in the restaurant.

The same thing was in her eyes now, as her book dropped to her lap. Damn the woman! Who was she, what was she, to turn everything upside down for him, to spoil his plans, to stir up his conscience and annihilate his peace of mind to the last shred? The wild animal that he had found wounded, and had nursed, had turned on him.

He stood glaring down at her, too angry at her and her beauty to speak to her. She smiled and was the first to speak.

"Well, Ellis, how are you?"

"Well enough, I suppose."

"And extremely bad-tempered, evidently. I'm glad."

"Are you? And why, pray?"

"Because I think I'm the reason. Am I?"

"Of course you are. Are you going to marry him?"

"Do you want me to? I must do anything you tell me, mustn't I?"

It was the old question; she was putting it up to him and would assume no responsibility herself.

"Do you want to? Do you love him? Are you willing to marry him for what there is in it for you?"

"So many questions all at once! You know the answers quite as well as I."

"Do I? I doubt it."

She did not question his statement, but her eyes fell, her lips formed a half smile, her fingers played nervously with the leaves of her book.

"Come!" he exclaimed. "Tell me, are you going to marry him?"

The question, asked the second time, roused her.

"Marry him! Marry that man and live with him, after I've lived with you! Don't be a fool, Ellis! You know better than that. To-morrow I'm going away, I'm going to disappear. You'll never hear of me again, but you may be sure that never so long as I live shall any man come into my life. I've had my happiness; now I'm going to pay for it, but the paying will not be hard, and I shall find a great deal of joy in it. You may tell Aunt Sophy before you go, if you like, that she may give him my answer for me."

Butler stood transfixed. The woman of many perplexities was appearing in still another rôle.

"You give up money, comfort, a

home, a safe future, very easily. Is a home nothing to you?"

"A home! A safe future! Don't you know what a home is? You think that because I have been willing to sell myself to earn my living, I would be willing to sell myself to a man, however little he is worthy, under false pretenses. Well, I wouldn't, and I know that down in the bottom of your heart you don't want me to. You came here to-night to tell me that I mustn't, now that something besides primeval hate is getting the better of you. A home! Is a house in itself, or a palace, a home? You know better than that, Ellis. How foolish men are—sometimes! I'm going away. Forget me, forget all about me, except to remember that after this I shall be a credit to you. I appreciate all that you have done, and they were heavenly days."

She ended with a rapturous smile on her lips, as if the memory of those days overwhelmed her with happiness. He did not know what to say to her. The problem was not solved by any means, but of one thing he was sure—she should not leave him. He would keep her close to him, where he could watch over her and protect her. Why was she different from other women? Why was she not a good woman? Of course she had not been a good woman, but why, as she stood before him, tall and graceful, beautiful beyond words, clean of mind and pure of heart, was she not a good woman? If she did marry the great man, would Butler be revenged, or would the great man win another victory?

Was the stain of bygone sin ineradicable? Was she more stained than he himself was stained? The enormity of the old question, and the uselessness and hopelessness of answering it, brought him back to earth. Whatever she had been, she was too precious now for him to treat lightly. She was one of God's fairest creatures, which

he, Butler, had in part created, and he must not leave her to the world's caprices. His duty was plain.

"Yes, Jean, they were heavenly days, and you and I cannot forget them, must not forget them. You and I have learned many things since those days began. It was a curious chance that brought us together; no chance must separate us. You must stay here with me, forget your foolish pride, let me take care of you and try to make you happy. I've never told you, but I have more money than any one man should have. I can't spend it. Let me use some of it to give you what you deserve."

She answered, quick as a flash:

"I told you, Ellis, that I wouldn't take your money. I've taken it since then because I had to have proof that you were not a brute. I had to know that you would never let your hate for a man sacrifice me. I know that now, and I will take no more."

"Not even if you come back to me as you were before?"

"I will not go back to you as I was before."

"You won't?"

"No, and I'm almost sure, Ellis, that you don't want me to. Come—dinner is ready. It's the last night. Stay with Aunt Sophy and me."

Dinner was over and the three were in the parlor. Aunt Sophy, understanding much and saying little, heard the doorbell and rose.

"Shall I send him in here?" she asked.

For a moment, neither answered, and then Ellis spoke:

"Let him come. I'd like to see him."

As the older woman disappeared, he walked to Jean's side, and with his arm about her shoulders, turned her toward him.

"You are mine, mine forever, do you understand?"



"That's as may be," she said, and drew away from him.

The great man stood in the doorway. For an instant, his face was suffused with boyish, smirking smiles, but when he saw Butler standing at Jean's side, his face clouded, his jaws closed, his beady eyes half shut, and his chin was thrust forward.

"What are you doing here?" It was a fool question, not worthy of a great man.

"And you?" Ellis laughed the words at him.

The great man's diplomacy struggled to the surface. It never paid to get angry too quickly before one understood things clearly.

"Well, well, suppose we sit down and talk a while. We can be friends here, with Miss Jeannette, can't we?" The "Miss Jeannette" riled Ellis.

"Hardly here of all places," he said. "And I hardly think it will be necessary for you to sit down while I tell you that Miss Gregg would be glad to have you leave us and not return. Within a few days, Miss Gregg will have given me the right to keep you away from her. So get out, please, and remember what I told you last spring. This is the beginning. Are you going?"

The great man stood trembling. His eyes wavered weakly to Jean's face and found no encouragement there. His great frame shrank, his chest sank inward, his jaw dropped. Ellis laughed at him.

"You see, Jean, what a coward he is, what a craven, common coward! He is supposed to have power and a lot of other things. Think how great will be the fall thereof, the fall that is coming so soon!" He turned to the great man. "Come, run along!"

The great man lurched and staggered.

"Get out!" And in those two softly spoken words, the great man heard the voice of the man who was not like

other men, the voice of the man he was afraid of. He turned and walked slowly to the door, steadying himself with his hand along the wall.

Jean and Ellis stood waiting till they heard the front door close behind him.

"You understand, Jean?" he asked.

"I understand nothing, Ellis, except that——"

"You are to marry me."

And so the most wonderful man in the world chose for himself the fate that he had once believed would disgrace and ruin another man who was his enemy.

They were married the next day and went South, and again were alone, this time on the water and on the sands of Florida. They stayed there till spring came, and then they took their way northward, leisurely, with a summer before them and his great work beyond. Finally they reached Philadelphia, and it was there that she turned his world topsy-turvy.

"I want you to take me to the funniest place in the world, Ellis," she said.

"Where and what is the funniest place in the world?"

"That's a secret, but I know the way, and I'll show you. It'll take two, perhaps three days to get there."

He laughed at her, and they departed, slowly as was their custom, paying tolls, as was the custom of Pennsylvania highways. They drove through fertile valleys, saw men with monstrous beards and barns with multicolored, geometrical decorations. They came to hills and then to mountains, and saw villages lying sleepily in the warmth of the new spring. On the third day, they came to a small city and, passing through it, found a hard, wide road. For an hour they drove along it till they came to a hill, and at the summit she made him stop and led him into a grove and a short way down the hill-side till they came to a spring.

"You see, I knew that it was here,"

she said. "Don't ask any questions—just give me a drink. It's wonderfully cool and pure."

Then she led him to a rock higher up and let him look at the quiet country below.

"Tell me, Jean, why have you come here? Is this any place in particular?"

"I told you not to ask questions. You must be good and mind, but I'll tell you something"—she looked up at him and smiled—"the most wonderful thing in the wide, wide world. Can you guess?"

There is only one most wonderful thing in the wide, wide world for a woman, and Ellis guessed and took her in his arms, and she laughed and almost cried, and patted his cheeks and ran her fingers through his hair, and then she sprang away from him and cried:

"Do you love me, Ellis? Do you love me so hard that it hurts sometimes? Do you love me so that you never think of what happened before you loved me, before you knew me? Do you love me now so much, and will you always love me so much, that that will never make any difference?"

"Neither that nor anything else can ever make any difference."

"Any difference to you! But will it make any difference to your son? For it will be your son, Ellis, if I have anything to say about it. But that isn't fair. I mustn't ask you a question like that. I've brought you all this way to tell you—to tell you— Oh, Ellis, how long ago it seems, the night I first saw you! No, it wasn't in the morning—it was at night, and you were on a platform speaking. I was a clerk in a big office. Some one had given me a ticket to hear you. I went because it gave me something to do. I couldn't afford to spend money for real shows.

"You stood up on a platform and smiled, and then began to talk, and it was all off with poor little me. If you

had shouted and waved your arms, I'd have laughed at you, but you didn't. You spoke just as if you were talking to me all alone, and sometimes I thought you looked straight at me. Most girls get their heroes from the movies or the stage. I got mine from the lecture platform, for your speeches were sort of lectures, weren't they? And when the people cheered instead of just clapping—oh, Ellis, I shut my eyes and dreamed that you were coming down into the crowd to speak to me! But you didn't, and I went out, and I read in all the papers about you the next morning, and I bought photographs of you, and, oh, I had all the excitement that goes with hero worship! That was two or three months before I spoke to you.

"You came back, and I followed you from your hotel on the streets as far as I could. I'd seen you, oh, so many times! I spent all the money I'd saved to travel over two hundred miles to hear you speak again.

"I saw you that morning driving toward the station, and I went into the station to see you, and when you came past me, I just spoke to you. I didn't know what to say. I don't know what I did say. But I'd have said anything or done anything just to be with you.

"Of course, I knew what you thought I was quickly enough, and I had a sudden inspiration. Why shouldn't I be that if—"

"Jean!"

"And so you really do care after all! But you loved me enough to forget what you thought I was. That's not such a bad way of proving love, Ellis. Don't forgive me, quite. I was a fool, but I found a paradise. I was willing to sacrifice every blessed thing just to be with you, but it wasn't a safe way to paradise."

An hour later, she led him back to the highway.

"So, old man, you're the villain of

this show, but you're not to play that part, if you can help it, in what's going to happen. I'm going to take you to the funniest little place, so that I can explain to some old friends of mine

that I was mistaken about God. See, we turn here."

She pointed to a sign, newly painted and held aloft by a new post, which read: "Hibbsville 8½ M."

## THE BAKING OF A MAN

(An Indian Legend)

SUN," said Old Crow, with thunder scream that echoed to the sky,  
"To-day Great Spirit makes his Man,  
The masterpiece of all his plan,  
And you must give us warmth and light, else newborn Man may die."

"What is this Man?" asked jealous Sun. "What do we need of him?  
Great Spirit has made creatures fair  
For all the waters, earth, and air.  
I will not lend my fires to help along this foolish whim."

Up croaked Wise Raven: "Sun, be still, or the Great Spirit hears  
Your wicked words; then will he steep  
You in the quenching waters deep,  
\*And change you into clouds and mist and everlasting tears!"

Madly the Sun glowed in his rage upon the smiling plain,  
As with his hands Great Spirit scraped  
The richest mud, and Chief Man shaped  
According to his father wish, bestowing strength and brain.

Noontide, Great Spirit finished; then he smoked his pipe and slept.  
So wicked Sun burned black the Man,  
Who howled with pain and southward ran.  
When Old Crow saw the charred Two-legs, he woke his lord, and wept.

Great Spirit, he was angry, but still loved his beautiful Sun.  
Next day again his Man he made  
And covered him with leaves, for shade,  
That he might not be blackened by the envious Golden One.

Alas, leaves were too thick, and Man turned out a chalky sight,  
And Raven and Old Crow were wroth,  
And led him to the snowy north.  
They wanted Man the proper hue—one neither black nor white.

Once more Great Spirit molded mud when Black and White were sped.  
He did not smoke or sleep or leave,  
And watched Man bake from morn till eve.  
Thus Man came forth the chosen shade—a noble, copper red!

D. E. WHEELER.



# Illustrated

By Margaretta Tuttle

Author of "In Velvet Gown,"  
"Anne Hamelton's Intrusion," etc.

THE duchesse came out on the new terrace she had recently added to the old château. As long as the late duc lived, she had not been permitted to make any changes in the château, but now there was none to gainsay her, though her husband's people had signified their disapproval of her American desire for change in no uncertain manner.

Even Anne Hamelton, who was far more American than the duchesse had ever been, had begged her to let the château alone or, if she must add to it, to use old material. So, because Anne was her best friend and an artist, the duchesse had gone to much trouble to buy old material and had demanded that Anne come to D'Arville to see the result with the eye of friendship as well as of art.

Anne denied being an artist; she said she was an illustrator. But the duchesse pointed to the size of her checks and to the habit she had of wandering about the world to draw.

The duchesse looked about the terrace and a manservant in blue livery came to her.

"Where is Mademoiselle Hamelton?" asked the duchesse, in French no practice would make perfect.

"Mademoiselle is in the garden, madame. She is preparing to start forth. Shall I summon her?"

"No, I'll go myself."

She found Anne sharpening pencils.

"Why don't you let one of the men do that?" asked the duchesse.

"Touch my pencils! I'd as soon have them chew my food!" She snapped her knife shut, slipped her pencils into their case, and picked up her sketchbook.

"Where are you going, and why?" asked the duchesse.

"I'm going to Versailles, for the same reason I have gone all these days."

"To the palace?"

"No, to the Grand Trianon; I want to finish the water colors for 'The King's Glove.' I'll probably lunch somewhere in the village, so I can get in a good day's work."

"Heavens, what a hurry! Haven't you plenty of time? And isn't this your vacation?"

"Both. But——"

"But?"

"Well, I thought I'd give you the whole day for Crystine Graybrook."

"But, Anne, she doesn't arrive until noon, and with her come five others."

"The five others will continue to be merely others."

"Why do you dislike her so?"

Anne opened her sketchbook and began to draw little curved lines. She did it as another woman might embroider, or make gestures, or sway to and fro in a rocking-chair.

"I have a dozen reasons."

"Suppose you give me one. Is it because she's so good looking?"

"I don't in the least mind her being

good looking—in fact, I much prefer it. A handsome woman is as pleasing to me as to any man. I think I really enjoy Crystine's effectiveness. But I wouldn't trust her with any living thing that belonged to me. You knew Robert Graybrook. There was no more brilliant man in our circle."

"Well, so far as I can see, he seems to have continued brilliant. His diplomatic career advances, he's well liked in London, he has an admirable establishment and more friends than he can count. And Crystine lets him alone most of the time."

"Precisely," said Anne. "As a diplomat's wife, she might be not only a success herself, but an enormous help to him, and what happens? She detests the people she has to be nice to; she offends those who are important to her husband, for no better reason than her dislike of them; she leaves him for months at a time and comes over here to France to divert herself with emotional stimulation——"

The duchesse laughed.

"I shouldn't call Crystine's very mild flirtations 'emotional stimulation.'"

"You've been living in France, and your taste for simplicity has been spoiled. How did you happen to invite her here now? I thought she intended to stay in America for several months."

"Oh, she wrote me a delicious letter, saying she had closed her Long Island house because her brother, who had been with her, was about to be married; that she had antagonized the three men most necessary to her happiness and had to get away from the results; that when affection failed, there were still pretty clothes, and she was coming to Paris for some. Of course I asked her to come here."

"What men have you asked?"

"Oh, a friend or two of Crystine's, and some of our neighbors, and Barry Lockwood."

"Who is Barry Lockwood?"

"An Irishman I used to know in America before I was married."

Anne gave a glance at the lavender gown that signified discarded mourning.

"An old suitor, Bertha?"

"Nothing so interesting. Almost a chance acquaintance. One of the million or so tourists who think their education is not complete without seeing the château district of France. I came on him by chance when I went into town last week to get my jewels at the bank. He was there getting a check cashed and having great difficulty with his French. I turned to look when I heard the American voice—somehow or other I never can help doing so—and saw a familiar face. I helped him get his money. Afterward he called on me at my hotel, and I told him that seeing the château district was not as instructive as living in a château, and that he'd better pay me a week-end visit. I couldn't promise him anything better than an Americanized château, but that seemed to be enough for him."

Anne stopped drawing the little curves with which she was covering the page of her sketchbook. The duchesse leaned over her shoulder.

"Why, that's Crystine Graybrook!"

"Yes," said Anne.

"But how hard you've made her look!"

"I saw her look like that once."

"Give it to me," said the duchesse.

"Not I," answered Anne, and with a dozen heavy lines cut into the delicate face she had drawn. Then she laughed, snapped her elastic around her book, and pulled her hat over her eyes. "Well, I'm off, Bertha. I'll see you at tea time."

## II.

At one o'clock Anne left the Grand Trianon and strolled up the Avenue of the Fountains to the palace. She passed through the *Galerie des Glaces* and the *Œil-de-bœuf* to the bedchamber of

Louis XV., to look at the portrait of Madame Adelaide, the heroine of "The King's Glove." She stood for a moment before the portrait, comparing it with her sketch; then nodded at it and went on her way.

Taking a turn to the left at the foot of the royal chapel, she followed a narrow street to a little inn. In a sanded garden little tables, covered with spotless linen and hedged in with bright green laurel, flaunted their invitation to the weary.

She was met by a plump Frenchwoman, capped and aproned, who led her to a corner where two tables stood under a striped awning; a special nook reserved for those whom madame knew would appreciate it. It was long past the usual lunch hour, and the place was deserted. Therefore, it was with pleasure that madame observed a second patron approach. She took in, with the critical eye of the connoisseur, the erect carriage and the pleasing air of opulence of the second patron, and then escorted him to the other table beneath the striped awning and handed him the *carte du jour*.

She then turned to Anne, who ordered an omelet, a filet of sole, a salad, and *tartelettes fraises*. Madame departed to give the order in the kitchen and then returned to the young man.

He looked up from a rather blank observation of the menu with the simple question, "Do you speak English?"

Madame shook her head and replied in French that she did not.

The young man spread out his hands.

"How, then, shall I order? What is this?" He pointed to the first article on the menu.

"*Potage, monsieur.*"

"*Potage?*" He shook his head; then looked across the table at Anne and lowered his voice. "Bring me what the young lady has ordered," he said.

Madame shook her head.

He made another attempt:

"*La jeune mademoiselle—m'apportez mademoiselle a commande.*"

Madame shrugged.

"*Mais, monsieur, c'est impossible!*"

"Impossible?" repeated the young man slowly. "But why?"

"*Monsieur—*" She turned in despair to Anne and spoke to her in French. "He is mad, mademoiselle, but have no fear. He shall not trouble you."

Anne's eyes rested a moment on the young man, and then came back to madame. She spoke in faultless French.

"It is not that he is mad, madame, but that he knows only the French he has probably learned in the district school. He is evidently a countryman of mine, and perhaps it would be kind of me to assist him. He does not seem able to order his luncheon."

"If you will be so kind, mademoiselle."

Anne looked across her table.

"Monsieur," she said quietly, "perhaps I can help you make yourself understood."

"You have no idea how grateful I shall be," said the young man. "It seems to me I haven't eaten for a thousand years, and I'm totally unable to order. I tried to simplify it by asking for what you had ordered."

"You succeeded," said Anne, "in asking for me, myself."

"Oh, I beg a thousand pardons! I'm outrageously stupid! How on earth did I do it?"

"You left out the necessary *ce que*. You should have said: '*M'apportez ce que mademoiselle a commandé*. It's a risky thing for a grown man to duplicate a woman's order. However, in this case you must take some kind of a risk."

She turned to madame and translated the young man's wish.

"You're very good," he assured her when they were alone.

"It was no trouble," said Anne, and



then added a phrase that made further conversation possible: "But it must take courage to come to France with so small a vocabulary that you are apt to go hungry."

"Ah, it does! - The funny part of it is that I had no idea until I arrived how small the vocabulary was. Even the perfectly good French words I know don't seem to be understood." He gave a rueful little laugh. "I had to shout, '*Du beurre!*' six times this morning before I could make the waiter understand it was butter I wanted. And then he threw up his hands and repeated the word after me with an entirely different sound of the vowels. I think I must hunt for a *table-d'hôte* place if I am to be fed."

Madame brought the omelet and the young man voiced his approval of Anne's order.

"Wait," she said, "until she brings you the sole. There never was such sauce."

"I offer you the gratitude of a starving man. Had I not encountered you, I should have been found dead on the road to D'Arville."

Anne raised her straight brows.

"Why on that particular road?"

"Because I shall set out on it soon."

"Are you going far on it?"

The young man hesitated ever so slightly.

"As far as the château," he said. It seemed to him to partake of the nature of a boast to announce to a strange young woman that he was on his way to visit the Duchesse D'Arville.

"There's an excellent train there," said Anne, "and it's rather a long walk. I should say ten miles or so."

The young man looked alarmed.

"Ten miles? Why, the guide at the palace told me I could walk it in an hour!"

"Did he tell you in English?" asked Anne.

"No, he didn't."

"Well, that's probably your trouble. I don't know how much of a walker you are, but it'll take you the rest of the afternoon to reach D'Arville on foot."

"Can you perhaps add to my indebtedness by telling me about the train?"

"I can," said Anne, "because I'm going to D'Arville on it. There's one that stops there on its way to Paris—the three-o'clock train."

The same rather pleasant hesitation that had been in the young man's manner at the opening of their conversation visited him now.

"Perhaps you can tell me if it is far from the station to the Château D'Arville."

"Ah, you're going there? It's two miles by the road, but there's a path through the wood that reduces the distance by half. I'm going by the short path."

Anne saw the question he scarcely dared to ask flaming in his face. He took his cardcase from his pocket and bent across to her table.

"It seems incredible," he said, "that I should have encountered an American when most I needed help, but it's even more incredible that I should have encountered one who is going in my direction."

He laid his card on the table, and Anne read, "Mr. Barry Lockwood."

"You know, Mr. Lockwood," she said, "it would be impossible for a French girl to show you the short path through the woods, but since we are both American, I will do it. Do you think you'd like the strawberry tarts I ordered for dessert?"

Her little question prevented him from making a favor of her consent and he had to answer it instead of thanking her. He picked up the *carte du jour*.

"Where are strawberry tarts on this diabolical thing?"

Anne pointed her finger.

"There. '*Fraises*' is the word for strawberries."

"I'm mad about them," Lockwood confessed. "I've never eaten anything like them. I believe they candy the strawberries in brown sugar. Perhaps you will teach me how to say *fraises*, so I can ask for them wherever I am."

"Monsieur," said Anne, "I never taught anybody anything in my life. But these are nice." She crunched her tart with a pleasure so evident that Lockwood laughed outright.

"Some day," he promised her, "I hope to have the pleasure of ordering *your* luncheon."

"The train," said Anne, "leaves in twenty minutes. Unless you're going to take your tart with you, you'd better be eating it."

### III.

The path through the D'Arville woods was so narrow that Lockwood had to drop behind Anne, rather to the interruption of the conversation that had continued between them from the inn to the train and through the long lane to the wood. This talk had covered the first stages of acquaintanceship with a rapidity that astonished Lockwood. Yet, as he considered it, he found that he had voiced his own opinions and his own history much more fluently than had Anne. He had told her that he was the junior member of his firm of architects; and that this was the first time he had had the leisure or the opportunity to go aboard; that he had special reasons for wanting to see Versailles; that he did not know the Duchesse D'Arville well, but was delighted with the opportunity offered him to increase his knowledge.

He did not remember that Anne had had much to say about herself. She had admitted that her name was Hamelton, but the name meant nothing to him. She had vouchsafed no further

account of herself save that she, too, was visiting at D'Arville. She now looked back over her shoulder and said:

"Did you say you came over on the *Meridiana*?"

"Yes," said Lockwood.

"Sailing the third of July? Did you meet Mrs. Graybrook? She crossed then."

He stopped in the middle of the path and stared at Anne, and then seemed to recollect himself.

"Yes," he answered. "I met Mrs. Graybrook."

"Well," laughed Anne, "that seems to have an extremely retarding effect on you."

"I was just astonished to hear her name so far away from the ship and on the lips of a new"—he paused a moment and added—"friend."

"There are people," said Anne, "all over the world who know Mrs. Graybrook."

"It's true," said Lockwood, and then stopped, for the sound of voices in angry dispute reached them—the voices of a man and a woman.

"No, no!" they could hear the woman cry. "I will have nothing to do with it!"

The man's answer was not distinct, but the girl's voice came again with a note of terror in it.

"Let me get ahead of you," said Lockwood, and the two broke into a run down the narrow path. It dipped into a small valley and turned sharply.

The sound of their hurrying feet must have reached the man and woman beyond, for the voices stopped.

"Wait," said Anne. "There's a by-path here that leads to the little drinking pool. That's probably where they are."

As they paused where the path separated, a young man came toward them. That he was a Frenchman was evident at first glance. He was well, almost jauntily, dressed, and he was very much

excited. It was apparent in both face and manner—the excitement of the Latin blood that is set afire by trifles. His snapping dark eyes regarded the two figures before him with annoyance, and he slowed up as he neared them, with an evident attempt to calm himself.

As the path was narrow and Lockwood stood at Anne's side, the Frenchman paused for them to make room for him to pass. Lockwood drew back. The Frenchman raised his hat and, with an apparently uncontrollable look of admiration at Anne, went on.

Another turn of the path brought them to a little pool, over which a young woman was bending, bathing her face. She straightened up at their approach, with a quick glance at Anne, which became frightened as she recognized her.

"Why, Henriette!" said Anne in French. "What is your trouble?"

"Mademoiselle"—the girl spoke hurriedly—"it is my sister's husband—he has come to me for my wages. He says he needs the money, but I do not believe him and would give him nothing, and he was angry."

Anne watched her a moment. Faces and their expressions were the materials of her work and she believed that the girl was lying.

"I should think, Henriette," she answered, "the duchesse would prefer that you receive your sister's husband at the château, and not here in the wood."

Henriette gave a quick look beyond Anne at Lockwood, and though she said nothing, the inference was so obvious that Anne felt herself flushing. When the maid did speak, it was with perfect deference.

"Yes, mademoiselle," she said, "the next time I will ask permission to receive him at the house. If you will permit me, mademoiselle, I will precede you, for I shall doubtless be going faster than you." With the grace of a Parisienne, she moved down the path

ahead of them and disappeared around a turn.

Lockwood put his hands into his pockets and gave a low whistle.

"It would appear," he said, "that you and I have been given a lecture in deportment."

"That is Madame D'Arville's maid," said Anne, and her voice was sharp.

Anne had not counted on facing an audience when she reached the house with Lockwood, but the week-end party had arrived and were having tea on the terrace. The duchesse rose and met them at the stairs.

"Well, Anne Hamelton," she said, "did you hide the truth from me when you said you were going to sketch? Now you return with one of my guests. When did you arrive, Mr. Lockwood?"

Lockwood had a moment's panic. He had no idea what one called a duchesse. In books, servants called them "your grace," and intimates referred to them as casually as if rank did not exist. He filled his pause with a frank smile and compromised on "madame."

"I arrived in this part of the country, Madame D'Arville, a day or two ago, but I've been studying Versailles."

"Dear me," said the duchesse, "did you have to, or did you want to?"

"Both," said Lockwood. "A little while ago I had to do some writing about something that was located there, and I did what scribblers call 'faking it'—that is, I put my Baedeker before me and wrote about it as if I'd seen it. It seemed it was quite time for me to discover how mistaken I had been."

"You didn't tell me," said Anne, "that you were a scribbler."

"I don't always confess it."

The three of them moved to the guests. The duchesse made a few presentations and gave Lockwood his tea. Anne's eyes swept over the group.

"Where is Crystine?" she asked. "Is she waiting to make an effective entrance?"

"Oh, Anne!" protested the duchesse.  
 "I was quite right," said Anne.  
 "Look!"

Framed by the broad doorway, with its cool background of gray and brown, touched by the light of the late-afternoon sun that lay on the north end of the terrace, a woman in pale green stood looking at the assembled group. She held a magazine with her finger slipped between the leaves, as if she had been reading and had somewhat reluctantly abandoned a pleasant story to join the group without. Presently she moved toward them in leisurely fashion, apparently in no way disturbed by the attention she was receiving.

"She does it well, doesn't she?" said Anne.

Then she saw Mrs. Graybrook's roving glance fall on Lockwood and become arrested. For a moment the quiet serenity of her face was disturbed, but the moment was so fleeting that even Anne was not quite sure she had not imagined the surprise and distaste. Then a really charming smile lightened Mrs. Graybrook's eyes and mouth.

"Why, it's Anne!" she said. "Sketch-book in hand!"

The duchesse smiled at Lockwood.

"May I present Mr. Lockwood, Mrs. Graybrook?"

Crystine turned toward the tea table with a little nod at Lockwood.

"Mr. Lockwood and I have met," she said, and crossed the terrace for her tea.

"Oh!" said Anne to Lockwood. "That ought to hold you for a while. You must have carved up Crystine's pet idea, or tramped on her chiffon train, or told her the truth."

"Perhaps," said Lockwood, "I did all three."

"I'm consumed with curiosity," said Anne. "I think you'll have to tell me about it."

"How can I?" said Lockwood simply.

"Don't you know," asked Anne, "what you have done to offend her?"

"Have I done anything to offend her?"

"Why, you callous young man! That should be evident to even an unthinking creature." Anne stared at him a moment and then gave a little laugh. "If it's a mystery, it'll add to your attractiveness. Didn't you tell me but a short time ago that I had saved your life?"

"I did," said Lockwood promptly.

"Then," said Anne, "it's quite proper that I should demand a reward. Indeed, I believe you offered me any return service that I should choose. I think you will really have to tell me what it was you did to Crystine."

She watched an embarrassed flush creep up the young man's face.

"I came over on the steamer with her," he answered.

"Well, that of itself wasn't enough, was it?" said Anne.

"I saw a good bit of her. Perhaps I bored her. It's said to be fatal."

Anne looked across the terrace at Crystine, who was now the center of a group of men, then back again at the extremely personable young man beside her. With her quick, artist's eye she took in his height and breadth and grace; she considered the fine, adventurous slant of his prominent nose, the generous width between his eyes, the curve of the square chin, and the fullness of the firm mouth.

"You haven't the look of a man who bores women," she said. "I don't believe it was that."

The group of people were separating to dress for dinner, and the duchesse returned to Lockwood.

"I'll send to the station at once for your trunk, Mr. Lockwood, and Gaston will show you to your room."

Lockwood followed the manservant up a splendid stairway to the second floor and down two corridors he prayed

he would remember. Ahead of him, the duchesse and Mrs. Graybrook stopped at the door of Crystine's room, concluding their talk. He passed them with a nod and a smile. As he moved a few steps farther on, a door on the other side of the hall was opened by the same maid he had seen in the wood. She drew back a step or two in sudden surprise; then with a "Voilà, monsieur," she looked down the hall at the duchesse.

"Ah," said Crystine, "your new arrival, Bertha, seems to know your maid."

"Does he?" said the duchesse.

"They spoke to each other as they passed."

"How could he know Henriette?"

Crystine shrugged.

"Coming over on the boat, he seemed to know a good many strange people. He was forever going down into the steerage, or hobnobbing with some one in the second class."

"But didn't you hear him say he had done some writing? Perhaps he writes well enough to be interested in people."

"Maybe," said Crystine. "Where did you pick him up?"

"Pick him up!" said the duchesse.

Crystine laughed.

"Really, Bertha, you do it very well. Paris is doing you good. To be able to show offense in three words indicates a finished product. And now that you're leaving off your mourning, you can begin to live." She picked up a fold of the duchesse's lavender gown. "Black was not becoming to you, and surely two years was quite long enough."

The duchesse shook her head.

"One feels strange emerging into colors again. I was long in making up my mind to it. But the other day I got my jewels from the bank; which proves, I suppose, that I am now definitely out of mourning."

"I shall wait until I see the jewels," said Crystine.

"They're really handsome. I'm to keep the D'Arville rubies until Raoul's marriage. As he is now only fifteen, I shall have plenty of time to tire of them."

"Too bad," said Crystine, "that you have to give them up at all. You should have had sons of your own, Bertha."

"Oh, Raoul is a good chap. We're quite fond of each other. I'm going to dress for dinner now."

#### IV.

After dinner Anne entered the library with Lockwood. The duchesse put out her hand to detain them, while waiting for Crystine to finish what she was saying.

"It's the stupid tourists," said Crystine, "that are making Versailles unendurable."

"It's the same tourist, however, who needs Versailles most," Lockwood answered.

Crystine paused a moment and then continued, as if the interruption had been of no consequence:

"On the day of the *Grandes Eaux*, it's beyond description."

Lockwood turned to Anne.

"You promised to show me the picture gallery. Since we're both Americans, do you think we might look at it now without troubling a chaperon?"

"I think so."

"What," said Lockwood, as they moved down the hall, "is the *Grandes Eaux*?"

"It means 'Great Waters.' It's the day the fountains play, and half of Paris comes to see them. Everything is crowded, and the guides spring up like mushrooms."

"I had a dreadful time," laughed Lockwood, "with my first guide. He took me through interminable apartments, lined with miles and miles of

battle paintings, and he babbled in French until my head spun. Then he escorted me through acres of portraits. I felt that every notable of France was before me, and my eyes ached over it. When he found that I was really too tired to take another step, he dragged me out of the palace and over other miles of gravel walk, from fountain to fountain, until I was an utter wreck."

"What a way to see Versailles! How could you learn to love it?"

"How did *you* learn to love it?"

"The usual way," Anne mocked, "propinquity! I lived near it. And you?"

"I always love at first sight," said Lockwood.

"Ah, yes," said Anne, "I forgot you are an Irishman. But the gardens were not meant to be taken in at first sight, not even with an Irish eye. One should taste them, a little each time, discovering for oneself the scenes of famous events that have changed history, finding exquisite bits for special feasting and new beauties for daily food."

"Oh," said the Irishman, "what a method of love! Do you employ it consciously and as a diversion?"

"Consciously, yes, but at present not as a diversion, but for business reasons."

"Business reasons?"

"Yes, I'm a business woman."

"It's incredible. It's quite impossible to connect you with business affairs."

"Why?"

He was quick to grasp the opportunity offered him.

"Because you're sympathetic and sensitive and artistic. Because you're considerate and kindly. Because you're a gift giver and not a bargain maker."

"You must have second-sight as well as first-sight," said Anne. "Have you by chance a pencil in your evening clothes?"

"Yes," said Lockwood, "and a notebook."

Anne turned the leaves of the notebook to find a blank space, then she looked up at Lockwood.

"This is not an architect's notebook. I recall now you said you were a scribbler."

"No, I'm an architect. But some of my playtime has been spent with a notebook."

"Have you published?"

"Yes, one novel. There's another about to go to press."

Anne stared, trying to recall his name.

"Do you use your own name?"

"No. The novels aren't good enough."

"You'll tell me their titles?"

"I'll send them to you if you like."

"Yes."

She had found a blank page and was drawing careless little lines on it. Presently she wrote a name under what she had drawn—a name that slanted and ran together in angular letters of the same height. He came and looked over her shoulder.

"No!" he exclaimed and then he looked again. Anne had drawn a young man whose hungry face, while plainly Lockwood's own, was funnier and more pathetic than his would ever be. Lockwood laughed. "No! It can't be you! I know that signature. I've known it for years, but I didn't dream it could be you. Hamelton is not an unusual name, and of course I didn't know you spelled yours with an 'e.'" The glow in his face struck an answering glow in hers. "But this is not business," he went on. "It's genius!"

She laughed outright.

"I draw for money and I get it, too, more than most of the artists who starve in garrets because of their lack of business sense."

"And you are here at Versailles drawing as a matter of business? I thought you were just idly amusing yourself with a little sketching."



"No. A new writer has written a novel of a man who fell in love with Madame Adelaide. It's a novel you would scarcely believe an American could have written, it's so vivid, and he's caught so well the very spirit of the days when France taught the world how to play. His publishers knew I was spending the summer with the duchesse and they asked me to submit illustrations in water colors. I don't usually work in color, but I've found it great fun." She paused, for a kind of blankness had clouded his face. "Why, what a talk of myself you have led me into!"

Then he brought out with difficulty, "Water colors—Versailles—— Well, upon my word!"

Anne smiled.

"I apologize for talking shop. Meanwhile, here are the lovely D'Arville ladies I brought you to see."

Lockwood did not even glance at them.

"Can one send a cable from the telegraph office at the station?" he asked abruptly.

Anne stared at him. Evidently he had lost interest in the D'Arville ladies.

"One can," she said.

"How late do they stay open at night?"

"Why don't you telephone and find out?"

Something in the curtness of her reply arrested his attention. He swept the lovely ladies a whimsical glance.

"Thank you for your goodness in showing them to me. Another day I should have taken keener pleasure in meeting them, but the truth is I've been suddenly reminded of a cablegram I must get off at once."

They walked back to the library silently and he left her at the door.

"They want you in the drawing-room," said the duchesse, as Anne came in alone. "The girls want to be taught

the difference between a one-step and a two-step."

"I can't dance these new dances," said Anne, "but Crystine can. Last winter she was the only woman in New York who could dance them gracefully."

"Oh," said the duchesse wistfully, "it's been so long since I danced!"

"Come, now, Bertha, and learn the tango," said Crystine. "Get an American man to dance it with you."

"Where is Mr. Lockwood?" asked the duchesse.

"I'm afraid," said Anne, "you'll have to wait about an hour for him. He's gone to the station to send a cable."

"What a time to do a thing like that!" exclaimed the duchesse. "It must have been of exceeding importance! Why didn't he let me send it for him?"

"Perhaps he didn't want you to know what it was," said Crystine.

The duchesse regarded her thoughtfully.

They crossed the hall into the drawing-room to join the dancers, but the duchesse found, after an hour's dancing, that the tango was not easily learned.

"I shall never do it in these slippers," she said. "Wait until I put on a pair with straps. Is Anne going to play now?"

Anne went to the piano, and the first bars of a swinging march rattled from her fingers. Its measure, accented by the beat of slippered feet, drowned the sudden peal of the electric bell in the hall upstairs and the answering rush of hurrying servants. Then voices, raised in excitement, floated down the great stairway. With one accord the dancers moved into the hall as the duchesse ran down the stairs.

"My maid—Henriette," said the duchesse, "is badly hurt. Will you telephone for the doctor, Anne?"

"What kind of hurt? What shall I tell him to bring?"

"Her head is hurt—some kind of a blow. It's bleeding and she's unconscious."

"Did she fall and hurt herself, or has she just fainted?" asked Crystine, as Anne went to the telephone.

"Neither, I think," said the duchesse. "I found her in my dressing room. There'd been some kind of struggle, for on the floor about her were some of my rings and several small jewels. It looked as if some one in a great hurry——"

"The rest of your jewels, Bertha," interrupted Crystine, "where are they?"

"They're gone—all that were in the case I took out of the bank last week—all the handsome ones, except these pearls I'm wearing."

There was a sudden hush.

"Are you sure?" asked Crystine.

"Yes. I looked myself, while the housekeeper and the other maids were trying to revive Henriette, and then the housekeeper looked. They're gone. I shouldn't have thought to look for them had these things not been scattered on the floor."

"You'd better telephone your lawyers, Bertha, and have them send for the police," said Crystine.

"In the middle of the night? Wait until the doctor comes and Henriette can tell us something."

Anne returned from the telephone.

"The doctor will be here in a few minutes. I caught him just as he had come in, and his automobile was at his door. Do you want the village police?"

"No," said the duchesse. "At least not now." She shook her head at the group of startled guests. "There's nothing any of you can do, unless you've seen or heard something that would throw light on this. You mustn't worry about it. It's much too late for you girls to be up. You'd better all

go to bed. I'll tell you anything we know or learn by morning. Crystine, are you and Anne coming up?"

"Where is Mr. Lockwood?" Crystine asked, as the duchesse turned into the corridor.

"He's just come in. He saw nothing out of the ordinary, either going or coming from the station. But he came in the front door and went straight to his room. He said he had to follow his cable with an important letter, and he was writing it when I called out. He was the first one to hear me."

"And came pen in hand," mocked Crystine. "It seems curious that he didn't telephone his cable, or that he didn't ask you to send it for him."

"He doesn't know enough French to telephone a cable," said Anne.

"And, of course," Crystine mused, "it may have been of so private a nature, Anne, that he didn't care to ask you to telephone it for him in your very perfect French, or one of the servants to take it to the station in his own English."

Now Anne had her own reasons for thinking that this cable was an unnecessarily hurried one, but she did not feel like explaining those reasons, connected somewhat intimately with her own vanity, to Crystine; so she said:

"Doubtless the young man can explain his cable, and there'll even be a record of it at the station."

"And doubtless he can explain also his going immediately upstairs to write an important letter late in the evening, though we were all dancing in the salon and his most natural course would have been to join us," Crystine answered. "Didn't you tell me, Bertha, that you met Mr. Lockwood in the bank when you went for your jewels?"

"Heavens, Crystine, what a brain you have!" murmured the duchesse. But it was quite clear that she was not following Crystine's reasoning, for she

broke into an anxious complaint. "What a thing to have happen! And only a week after I had the jewels, when all my in-laws are watching me because I've gone out of mourning and are furious with me for altering their old château! I have jewels enough of my own—or rather I did have before to-night. But I hate to be put in this position of having lost somebody else's property."

"They'll be found, Bertha. They're too well known to be disposed of easily," said Crystine. "But you'd better send for the best detectives you can get and you'd better do it at once. And I think"—she glanced at Anne and lowered her voice as they entered the duchesse's room—"that they'll feel like inquiring into anything unusual that occurred among the guests, as well as among the servants."

For all the lowering of Crystine's voice, the last sentence was quite audible to those in the room. Lockwood, who had helped to lift Henriette to a couch and was waiting to see if there was anything else for him to do, spoke to the duchesse.

"There must have been some information given to the thief from the inside. Your maid will surely be able to tell you something."

The duchesse joined Anne beside Henriette and stared down at her. She had begun to move her head restlessly to and fro.

"Somebody," said Crystine, "who knew the habits of the house must have told the thief the best time to come, and where—"

"Hush!" said Anne, for Henriette had opened her eyes and was staring at Lockwood. Her lips began to move.

"*Vous—vous savez,*" she whispered brokenly. "*Dites—*" Her voice trailed into silence.

"What does she mean?" murmured Lockwood.

"She said: 'You know,' and, 'Tell,'" said Crystine.

The duchesse looked at Lockwood queerly.

Anne answered a knock at the door. "Here's the doctor, Bertha. Perhaps now Henriette will be able to continue what she tried to say."

But the task of restoring Henriette was not so simple, and the doctor at length admitted it.

"Will you send her to the hospital, madame, or shall we have her removed to her room and get a nurse? It will be some days, perhaps, before she can answer questions."

"I'll keep her here," said the duchesse.

"Come now, Bertha," urged Crystine, "and telephone to Paris. It's not midnight yet."

"Ugh!" shuddered the duchesse. "I feel as if I were in a moving-picture show."

Morning found a group of low-spirited guests inventing excuses for the termination of their visits. Two quiet and decorous men arrived from Paris on an early train and went about softly, interviewing the servants, observing the guests, and examining the château. Henriette's condition remained unchanged.

Lockwood found Anne at a desk in the library, and by her drawn brows and chin sunk despondently in the palm of her hand, he gathered that something was very wrong with her. As he stood looking at her, a letter fluttered from her lap to the floor. He stooped to pick it up and could not choose but see its letterhead—"Lansing Brothers, Publishers." He handed the letter to her.

"Is this robbery blotting out the sunshine of your day?" he asked.

She shook her head.

"No, for the moment I had forgotten it in the depression of my own difficulties."

He hesitated a moment, then took heart.

"Difficulties are to overcome, not to depress, aren't they?"

"Not this kind." She looked up at him from under her close-drawn brows and met with an interest so vivid that it was almost magnetic. She put down her letter. "All my Versailles work is wasted. The author doesn't want water colors. It's a pity he couldn't have made up his mind before I began. I should have preferred sepia—much preferred it."

"Perhaps he didn't know that the work was already begun. Perhaps he's new to illustration and such things."

"That doesn't help me. I've given up my vacation to work I can probably never use—days and days of useless work!"

She turned in her chair and caught sight of the duchesse and Crystine at the door of the library, with the two discreet men from Paris. They seemed to be watching Lockwood.

"H'm!" said Anne. "And that reminds me that the night has brought me counsel. I have something to say to those four. I can't think why I didn't recall it last night. They're coming in. Wait, Mr. Lockwood."

The duchesse approached, a faint embarrassment in her voice.

"Mr. Lockwood," she said, "Monsieur Duclasse would like you to tell him about your cable last night. I hope you don't mind?"

"I don't mind, Madame D'Arville."

"You saw nothing out of the ordinary, monsieur, either going or coming?"

"Nothing."

"You see, monsieur"—the detective spoke in excellent English—"we are of the opinion that the thief, collaborating with the maid, entered the house in evening clothes that were in no way different from those of the guests. Otherwise he would have been discerned by

some one of the servants. This way, however, and selecting the time when Madame la Duchesse would be occupied with her guests—voilà, monsieur!" He spread his hands in a resigned gesture, but his small eyes became keen. "Perhaps, monsieur, you will find no objection to telling us to whom you sent your cable?"

Lockwood caught a quick glance passing between the two detectives.

"I do mind telling you just now. But if you'll wait until afternoon, when I shall probably have an answer to the cable, then I will gladly tell you all about it."

"Madame la Duchesse," said Duclasse, "have we madame's permission to be frank?"

The duchesse sighed.

"I suppose so, but it seems very foolish to me."

"Monsieur," said the detective, "do you prefer that I should speak to you in private?"

"No, I do not," said Lockwood.

"*Bien.* Monsieur, Madame Graybrook has informed us that you were present when Madame D'Arville received her jewels from the bank—"

"I? How did I know what Madame D'Arville received from the bank?"

"That the maid seemed to recognize you when you entered the house," continued the detective imperturbably, "that again, last night during her brief moment of consciousness, she recognized you. You will see, monsieur—"

Of all those in the room whom, in his astonishment, he might have looked at, Lockwood bent his gaze on Anne. She was drawing on the back of her publishers' letter.

"Why, the maid recognized me because I met her in the wood the day I arrived," said Lockwood. And this simple sentence created such an extraordinary effect that once more he looked at Anne.

"I will tell them about that," said

Anne, looking up from her drawing, and then, seized with a sentiment too feminine for Lockwood's entire comprehension, she concluded, "You tell them first about your cable."

"Very well. Will you take the cable down, Monsieur Duclasse, while I dictate it? You can verify it at the station. It was sent to Wilson Lansing, New York, and it read: 'Since I have seen Versailles, I recognize that water colors are the best medium for the illustration of 'The King's Glove.' Kindly keep to first arrangements.'"

Anne's pencil point was arrested in mid-air. Her eyes flashed at Lockwood and held him. There was a moment of rather blank silence in the room.

Then Duclasse inquired blandly, "Is it a code, monsieur?"

"No. You wish a further explanation of my affairs? I am about to publish a novel of the time of Louis XV." He spoke with his eyes on Anne. "It's a swashbuckler story full of battle, murder, and sudden death, and I wrote it without having seen Versailles. Before I arrived here and while I was still in Paris, my publishers wrote me that they were illustrating my book by water colors done by a woman. I was dumfounded; if ever a book seemed to demand the pen of a man and not the brush of a woman, it was my book, so I cabled a remonstrance. Having, however, at length seen your beautiful palace, I changed my mind and cabled again. Is this explicit, monsieur?"

"*Mon Dieu!*" murmured the detective, and looked at the duchesse.

But that lady was regarding Anne with shining eyes and seemed for the moment to have forgotten her loss. Anne gave her small attention. She had turned to the detective.

"Monsieur Duclasse," she said, "let me now tell the incident that caused Henriette to recognize Mr. Lockwood. I've been waiting to tell you of it all morning. It occurred yesterday."

She made her story brief and she concluded:

"The man had to stop to pass us until we got out of the way, and we saw him closely and for some seconds. He was young and well dressed and French. He was also very angry. And when we reached the woman, it proved to be Henriette. She, too, was angry, but she was more—she was exceedingly frightened. I think she thought we were the man returning."

"Pardon, mademoiselle, but how were you so sure of this anger and fright?"

"Because, monsieur, I am an illustrator. I spend my life drawing faces. I know expressions as you know your Bertillon measurements."

"But, mademoiselle, do you not see that this story explains perfectly the whole thing; that it reveals, without a doubt, the direction we must take and the person we must seek? What a folly to seek for a motive among guests whose lives are known, and whose finances are not involved, when here at hand this thing has occurred! Ah, if only one of us had known this before we left Paris! If, even now, mademoiselle, you can give us a working description of this man— Then by the time the maid shall have sufficiently recovered— Mademoiselle, you can describe him to us?"

Anne leaned across the desk to the two men from Paris and held out the publishers' letter on whose back she had been drawing.

"Monsieur," she said, "that is the man who was talking to Henriette."

The detective took the paper, and his face became keen and shrewd. Not for nothing had Anne spent her life drawing faces.

"*Pierre, vite! Vite!* It is Delaroché! Of a certainty it is Delaroché! And as if he were photographed! Mademoiselle, it is indeed a marvel that you can do this thing! Delaroché cannot escape. He is but too newly out of

prison. He was but lately released for robbing one of your compatriots of her pearls, sent as a wedding present. He is known to all of us. But the marvel of it! You might have made a so excellent description, mademoiselle—color, height, appearance—and yet we should not have known that it was Delaroche; while here is proof. Madame la Duchesse, it will mean the recovery of your jewels. With madame's permission, we go to use madame's telephone. You will excuse us?"

"Yes," said the duchesse with a long sigh of relief. Then she turned on Crystine. "Well, I must say, Crystine——"

But Crystine was far down the library.

The duchesse watched her a moment.

"I am certainly in a moving-picture show," she said. Then she looked at Lockwood. "You must have offended her very deeply at some time or other."

"Yes," said Lockwood. "I'm afraid I did."

A manservant entered the room.

"A cable for Mademoiselle Hamelton."

Over the cablegram Anne looked at Lockwood, and the duchesse, observing the look, moved quietly from the room.

Anne read aloud:

"Author pleased with color sketches. Disregard letter. LANSING."

She held out her hand, and he took it in his.

"What fun!" said Anne softly. "We can work together."



## THE DESERT GARDEN

DREAMING, I said: "When she is come,

This desert garden that is me

For her shall offer mellowly

Its myrrh and its olibanum—

When she is come.

"The flowers of the moon for her  
With blossoms of the sun shall bloom,  
The fading roses breathe perfume,  
The lightly fallen petals stir,  
And sigh to her.

"Her presence, like a living wind  
Each little leaf makes visible,  
Shall enter there, or like the spell—  
Upon the lulling leaves divined—  
Of silent wind."

Alas, for she is come and gone,  
And in the garden, green for her,  
The flowers fall, the flowers stir  
Only to winds of night and dawn!  
For she is gone!

CLARK ASHTON SMITH.



icture  
ed at  
ended  
ther."  
fraid  
n.  
amel-

ed at  
rving  
room.

Dis-  
ng."

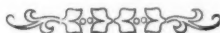
took

"We



# Wanted: a Blemish

By Jessie E. Henderson and  
Henry J. Buxton



IT would have shaken Boston to the depths could the inner nature of Carver Elliott Endicott have been revealed. For the clean-looking young man with the nose glasses—of course!—with the deep-brown eyes and the deep-blue blood had conceived a positive hatred for culture.

He sniffed when people spoke of the Old State House. He yawned in the face of Commonwealth Avenue. He passed the Frog Pond with a negligent shrug. In plain words, the responsibility of having been born in Boston was beginning to get upon his nerves.

To an outsider, such distaste for a life hedged by refinements might have seemed something less than a crime. But to one of the ultra circle, where Browning is an everyday matter and the butler understands Sanscrit, this unnatural abhorrence was nothing short of blasphemy.

Endicott blamed most of his troubles on his yellow hair. People thought he had the placid, peace-loving nature which yellow hair generally entails. But somewhere far back among the throng of his cool-voiced ancestors, there must have been an incursion of wild and foreign blood—a quaint marriage, perhaps, with somebody from Camden, New Jersey. At any rate, Endicott secretly repudiated his yellow hair and all its works. He wanted to be a devil.

Thus far, the only shock he had given society was by winning honors at Har-

vard. It hadn't been considered quite the proper thing in the Beacon Hill set to court the conspicuous in anything so ordinary as culture. Athletics, now—But a patrician defect of vision had kept Endicott off the varsity teams, with the deplorable result just mentioned. Society quickly forgave him this lapse into notoriety, however, in view of his meritoriously commonplace behavior afterward.

Indeed, society would have been the loser had it dropped him, for Endicott came of a famous line of calm and cultivated creatures. Through generations, his family had used the oyster fork. There hadn't been a split infinitive among the Endicotts for centuries. And the very day of Carver's birth, when he emitted plaintive, but eminently cultivated yelps from his early-Renaissance cradle in his late-Queen-Anne nursery—that very day had seen his name entered on the waiting list of the Bithunian Club.

He had been born, moreover, in one of the half dozen old mansions that still remain on Beacon Hill. Scorning to notice the thrusting crowd of office buildings and art shops, these half dozen aristocrats stood their ground, coldly aloof from everything that did not employ a dozen servants and the broad "a." Yet not even a dozen servants and the broadest "a" in the language constituted an open sesame to the heavy-paneled front doors of these select sarcophagi. The visitor, to be

welcomed, must be one of "ourselves"—if you realize what that means.

Endicott, then, had enjoyed the privilege of first squinting at the light in a mansion that helped form the inner citadel of the most exclusive circle. There is, north of Etah, an atmosphere very like in temperature to that in which Endicott received his bringing up. Only, north of Etah, the plebeian sunshine occasionally glimmers forth nakedly, not decently draped, as on Beacon Hill, by velvet hangings, gold cornices, and the other gorgeous paraphernalia of the great.

Since the world saw Endicott through a haze of oyster forks and velvet hangings, of Bithunian Club and Harvard, of Beacon Hill and millions and ancestry, the world may be pardoned for its belief that Endicott would no more have wished to do something dreadful than he would have appeared in evening dress at noon. But ha! Also, yah! The world little knew what yearnings surged beneath the scrupulously correct tennis shirt of C. E. Endicott, third!

He wore tennis togs because he was in Lenox at the moment, engaged to a girl who played tennis every day. Endicott didn't like the game, but he sat round the courts and made himself pleasant, when he would rather have been running a locomotive or doing something really outrageous. His engagement was a source of some satisfaction to him. It had all been arranged when he and Margaret were in knickers. Margaret lived on Commonwealth Avenue and belonged to the Assembly. So of course the betrothal came close to being inevitable. Margaret was so suitable—pretty, too, in the slim, almost anxious way that Boston society girls often have.

Miss Bradford tripped across the courts now, gave a backward glance of approval at the rolling Berkshires, all lavender in the afternoon haze, and

beckoned Carver with a sunburned hand. Endicott reflected that it was this sunburned hand which chiefly restrained him from doing something bizarre. Margaret would be so awfully hurt, y' know, and all that. Surprised, too, of course. For how could any one suspect that when careful mothers intrusted to his care, unchaperoned, their daughters, he really wanted to shove the luckless maidens off some Berkshire cliff and tell the world about it?

"Such a nice boy!" the mothers murmured. "Nice"—blooey! Or whatever the Beacon Hill equivalent may be.

Perhaps Margaret saw a latent sparkle of savagery in his deep-brown eyes. At any rate, she paused to look at him keenly a moment before she said:

"Take me to some place where I can get a vanillar sodar. You have the cah here, haven't you?"

The "cah" was brought, and Endicott took her to some place where she could get a "vanillar sodar." Margaret sipped the drink daintily through a straw, the adequate, but not vulgarly large diamond of her engagement ring aglitter in the sunset. The glitter of the stone caught Margaret's eye.

"I don't want to be married," she said.

"Isn't it being done this season?" Endicott asked.

"To you," Margaret added, ignoring the flippancy. And she drew the ring from her finger, placing it on Endicott's side of the table, next to his raspberry college ice.

"Mahgaret!" Endicott exclaimed in well-bred surprise.

Margaret raised her brows.

"What have you ever done?" she demanded gently. "I don't want to marry a man that's just—just— Well, what *have* you done? It doesn't interest me, the thought of marrying you." Carver looked incredulous. "You're neither one thing nor the other. You're

just well bred. I like them—unusual, myself."

"Margaret!" Endicott stammered again. "Why, I'm awfully unusual, really. If you really knew me——"

"Of course," Miss Bradford went on, "you're an awfully nice boy——"

Endicott groaned. The curse of his yellow hair again.

"——and some day you'll marry an awfully nice girl."

"I won't!" cried Endicott. "I want to marry *you*."

Margaret let the subtle compliment pass.

"You'll get over it soon," she comforted, scanning his face rather disappointedly for some trace of the storm that her announcement should have created. A dazed surprise seemed the chief emotion that Endicott felt. Margaret's very lovely lips curled.

"I'm sorry you take it so hahd."

"Hahd!" echoed Endicott. "Why, Margaret—you can't—— Is there some one else?"

"Of course," retorted Margaret. "I'm engaged to him."

Endicott felt a surge of the wild foreign blood from Camden, New Jersey.

"Who is it?" he cried, almost roughly, for an Endicott. "I'll—I'll——"

"Oh, I wouldn't," Margaret soothed. "And maybe you'd better begin to call me m'ma. I'm engaged to your father."

H'm? Oh, yes—father was a widower by this time.

The savage Camden blood began to get the better of Carver. Really, you know, this was too much. His father! His fath——

"Well, what's *he* ever done?" demanded Carver in passionate resentment.

Margaret considered.

"Well—he took me away from you," she suggested.

At the cool impudence of the words, Camden came into its own. No longer had the yellow hair, the Puritan an-

cestry, any influence on the turbulent spirit of Carver Elliott Endicott, third. A "nice boy," eh? A quiet, self-contained worm from whom one's own father could steal one's own girl without fear of a quarrel with oneself? He'd be a worm no more! He'd be a viper! He'd write the name of Endicott in letters of phosphorescence across the world! He'd—he'd—he'd——

In pursuance of this laudable desire to make the name of Carver Elliott Endicott a hissing and a byword, the young man took the next train for Maine and a lumber camp. He told a few choice friends not to say a word of this to any one; so, before the train reached Haverhill, Massachusetts, all Lenox knew that the scion of Boston's proudest house was going to defile his hands and his honor with manual labor. Unofficial couriers announcing the fact sped to Commonwealth Avenue. By the time Carver had reached the Androscoggin, some zealot had tipped off the newspapers.

Carver got the printed result next day as, with a grim mouth and a stern eye, he set forth from a summer-boarder farm deep in the woods to look for a lumber foreman and infamy. Unless you have spent a night in a summer-boarder farm, deep in the Maine woods, you cannot understand all the inwardness of Carver's stern eye and mouth.

The newspaper headlines cheered him. They announced baldly the fact that he had become a lumberjack. The article beneath them added a few juicy statistics about the Endicott wealth and fame, and the delicious information that Carver's father had refused to make any comment. Evidently the news of father's engagement had not yet leaked out, so no suspicion of Carver's real motive appeared to soften the blasting effect of his rash deed.

It was easy enough to find a lumber camp. The merry sound of the steam

saw had waked the summer-boarder farm ere it was yet dawn, an extra added attraction of which the summer-boarder farm did not speak in its folder. Carver talked with an unsympathetic foreman who seemed never to have heard of the Endicotts or of the *May-flower*. Carver explained his willingness to accept a position. The foreman said he didn't want no half-baked tenderfeet, because rustling lumber was a man-size job.

"Besides, you'd look fine, wouldn't you, cuttin' timber in them pants and spectacles?"

A disconsolate Endicott, hands and reputation unsullied, made his way back to the awful noontide of the summer-boarder farm. After lunch, however, he trudged to another camp of which the landlady told him. The second foreman was a discouraging person, too.

"I ain't got no job for you," he remarked in his Maine patois. "There ain't a job in this camp, except cook's helper. You know how to peel p'taters?"

"Certainly," retorted Carver. "I've peeled thousands of them." And he resettled his glasses astride his Endicott nose with an efficient jerk.

The foreman raised his hat, scratched his head, hitched his suspenders, spat.

"Y' can't tell by his looks how fur a frog can jump," he admitted.

Within thirty minutes, Carver had ruined a pair of new trousers and a pint of new potatoes. He had lost that grim look about the mouth. Infamy was his, and he couldn't wait to see the next day's headlines.

There hung in the air a fragrant, woody smell that pleased the potato peeler's senses. Through the roof of pine boughs above his station outside the cookhouse sifted little sprays of sunlight. The matting of pine needles lay deep and soft beneath his feet. Even the screech of the steam saw had a restful note, reverberating through

the forest aisles. The yells of the lumberjacks, also, were as music to the ears of one accustomed to hug the stadium cheering section during a Yale-Harvard game.

Carver decided that he had chosen a delightful way of smirching his family. For the first time since the Boston Tea Party, the hands of an Elliott Endicott were dirty to the nails. He eyed his nails lovingly. Little trace of their brilliant polish survived. A nice, stained, repulsive paw in which to clasp the tiny hand of "m'ma!"

"M'ma" indeed!

Cooks are an unfeeling class. Perhaps the strain of turning raw stuff into digestibles is too much for their dispositions. Or more likely they become cooks just because of their temperament. If they had good voices, they'd become opera singers. The person who now addressed Carver did not have a good voice. Therefore, he was the cook.

"Heavenly grief!" he said, or words to that effect. "You must think them p'taters is Germans, the way you're cuttin' 'em to pieces. Say, they need you in the trenches."

"I'd be glad to be in the trenches," Carver explained with dignity, glancing not without pride at the decimated potatoes in his lap. "But I was unable to pass the tests."

"Bertillon or Binet?" the cook inquired.

His pronunciation made Endicott wince. So did his meaning. Yet even as Endicott winced, he marveled that to this place, so far from Boston, there should filter some knowledge of the greatest criminal and insanity experts. Evidently the fellow had been to night school. Or to jail. Or he read the papers. The latter thought gave Carver a bit of uneasiness. He didn't really want this crowd of lumberjacks to read about his lineage and all. Somehow he felt that they wouldn't appreciate it.

His uneasiness proved unfounded, because, when the lumberjacks finally read the public prints—with side-splitting guffaws of appreciation—Carver was not of their company.

"P'taters is worth thirty cents a quarter peck, on the hoof, and you're worth a nickel a month," the cook said by way of valedictory.

Wandering back to the farmhouse through the village, Carver bought the Boston newspapers. He suffered a horrible disappointment. The special writers had fallen upon him as fair game in a dull season. They spent their adjectives with a lavish hand. They eked out word pictures with sketches hot from the newspaper art department. Carver saw, with a sinking of spirit, that he was a hero.

A millionaire's son, scion of the house of Endicott, the fastidious youth who had never done an hour's work in his life—gone into a lumber camp to help win the war! Rejected by the military doctors because of defective eyesight, the intrepid youth had gritted his teeth, swallowed his disappointment, and quietly dedicated himself to aiding the shipbuilding program by felling acres of timber. He was as much the gallant soldier as if he crouched in a first-line trench. If anything, he had just a little bit on the Rainbow Division itself.

There were photographs of Carver and of his home on Beacon Hill. There were sketches of Carver at the tennis court, lolling on the deck of his father's yacht, eating nonchalantly in the banquet hall of the Endicott home, three lackeys at elbow. And there were other sketches of Carver—spruce and virile and incredibly square-chinned—yanking the giant pines about, sawing them through single-handed, and setting the rough, but artistic log-cabin mess hall roaring with his democratic good nature. He did set it roaring, to be sure. But, as has been hinted, he was not among those present.

Carver stopped on the village street, petrified, as the romance and heroism of what he had done seared into his brain. Sweat broke out on his forehead. The curse of his yellow hair still pursued, and against the blight of his illustrious ancestry it seemed vain for him to struggle. Here he stood, a perfect devil—the cook had said so, rescuing the potato remnants—and nobody would believe it. Blinded by the glitter of his money, hypnotized by the splendor of his position, a fatuous world refused to look upon him as the scoundrel that he felt himself to be.

All the Camden in Carver went berserk, and took him to that place where all bad Bostonians go when they die, or earlier—New York.

For on the very page that pictured Carver in his assault upon the monarchs of the glade there shone forth a piquant account of the adventures of Maybelle de Neyville. Her latest escapade had been the obtaining of an acquittal after the highly accidental shooting of her third ex-husband. Maybelle had appeared in court with the famous Yardley diamonds—fragments of her second matrimonial disaster. Her latest of ex-husbands had appeared with his arm in a sling and testified vindictively. You know what a vindictive witness could do to Maybelle. He had done it.

But Maybelle, weeping lusciously in a mauve gown and the Yardley diamonds, had denied every horrid accusation, even the one about the champagne in her bath. A jury of her peers had therefore done all it could in her behalf except to petition Congress to grant this lady a medal. Maybelle had left the courtroom amid tears and cheers.

Carver decided to marry Maybelle. He would make "m'ma" a present of Maybelle as daughter-in-law. He defied any one to find anything uplifting and noble about that—unless Maybelle

also fell victim to the legend of impeccability that incased him and, under the spell of his magnetic name, entered a convent or the Red Cross, neither of which seemed likely.

Miss de Neyville had resumed her rightful place as part of an incandescent musical comedy, a rôle slightly interrupted by the fantastic charges of ex-husband No. 3 and rendered, by virtue of his unwilling and unwitting aid, all the more luminous and lucrative. The manager had added a champagne scene, inspired by the testimony. "Naughty, Naughty!" was the name of the comedy. The critics rechristened it "Nutty, Nutty!" It was all of both.

To Carver, seated in the orchestra near the front, came a sudden picture of himself leading Maybelle up the steep flagged path that ran from Beacon Street to the Endicott residence. He saw old Benton fling open the massive door, strangling the surprise that even a footman must occasionally feel. He saw his father enter the ponderous drawing-room with "m'ma" by his side—the drawing-room where Maybelle waited like a tropic bird in a tomb, or a tablespoonful of tabasco in a glass of "vanillar sodar." He heard himself speak.

"M'ma"—how he would relish pronouncing it!—"m'ma, allow me to present My Wife. She was Miss Maybelle de Neyville—you must have heard of her."

And Maybelle, in that glorious, but vulgar hat, that flamboyant, but becoming gown—Maybelle would fling her perfumed arms around the neck of Carver Elliott Endicott, second, and cry aloud—so much aloud that Newspaper Row could hear it—"Fathe-er!"

Oh, boy!

For Carver had picked up some of the patois while a lumberjack.

Suddenly the young aristocrat blushed. It is a habit that Bostonians have, in the theater. And even as

he blushed and turned away his glance, he knew that no matter how dreadful his inner nature might be, no matter how much he burned to cast discredit on his family, he simply could not marry Maybelle de Neyville. For right there on the stage she had split a bottle of champagne and a couple of infinitives with the leading man. She had pronounced "laugh" as if it had been "laff." And—well—she didn't act like a Beacon Hill wife.

All this was absurd, because for exactly those reasons Carver wanted this lady to bear his name. Yet so strange and potent a thing is atavism that Carver, disgusted, had actually risen from his chair determined to leave the theater when—

The Big Idea flashed across his brain.

He sat down again, stunned by the beauty of it. All the expense of marriage and none of the trouble! All the scandal and none of the inconvenience! A hundred, a thousand times more glorious and horrible would it be to have in the Endicott family what had never spiced the pages of its annals before—a suit for breach of promise!

Somewhere, afar off, the Camden ancestor snickered.

The card that accompanied his first gift of orchids to Miss de Neyville roused a ripple in the emotions of that lady, always ready to quiver at the first breath of an "affair."

"Not *the* Endicott, third?" she demanded of her companion, a plain girl with starry eyes and a gentle mouth. Maybelle de Neyville liked to have plain women about her. She pursed her rouged chin—a beautiful chin it was, too—over the card, bestowing on the orchids the merest appraising glance. "H'mmmmm-mm," she murmured. Which meant much.

It meant, among other things, that Endicott received a note written on



deep pink paper that smelled as the Vale of Araby.

"Your beautiful flowers have touched me so deeply," said the impressionistic handwriting. They had touched Endicott rather deeply, too, at the prevailing price. "Will you not come to see me some evening? I should like to thank you in person." And a little sentimental quavering about the inspiration which an artiste—however persecuted—derives from a loyal public.

Except for the scent and the tint of the paper, her note was a gem of good taste. Endicott perceived that the lady had begun, as his fellow lumberjacks would say, throwing the hooks into him.

Next evening he accepted the challenge—for it was really such—and went to the dressing room whither Maybelle retired after the second act. The companion with the starry eyes admitted him, gasping, "Oh!" when her freckled nose ran into the enormous flower box that he carried.

"Mr. Endicott," she announced somberly to the vision seated before the mirrored dressing table.

The vision rose. In spite of himself, Carver felt his heart pound. Even at close range, she was entrancing. Though the marriage statistics gave the date of her first venture as somewhere away back in his mother's time, Endicott could well imagine that a kinglet might sigh for this woman, as an ardent press agent swore a kinglet did. The mystery and wicked charm of this heroine of a hundred heartbreaks made him a bit giddy. By an effort he reminded himself that the heartbreaks were not on Maybelle's side. Her own heart remained as unscarred as one of the Yardley diamonds.

"I wonder if I can make you realize," Miss de Neyville was murmuring in the low, delightful voice that sirens like to use.

Carver didn't know what she was

trying to make him realize. He didn't care, so long as those half-veiled, exquisite, greenish eyes held his own and the smooth velvet hand returned the pressure of his fingers. What splendid, coppery hair! What youthful grace! What eyes, like living aquamarine!

"To-morrow?" she was repeating, and Endicott realized that he had asked if he might call. "Come for tea, will you?"

*Would he!*

After the companion sullenly closed the door behind him, Miss de Neyville, tearing open the enormous flower box, uttered the opinion that she had him going.

"Nonsense!" the plain girl replied sharply. "He's from *Boston*."

Her warning fell unheeded. Miss de Neyville uttered a squeal of gratification.

"What do you know about that?" she gloated, and disentangled from the flowers a narrow onyx-and-diamond bracelet.

The gift and the call were but the prelude. Carver dined Miss de Neyville in out-of-the-way places where he was not likely to be recognized. He haunted the theater. He took her for long drives and let her tell him how she had never before felt such a sense of understanding and—you know. And how dreadful that shooting affair had been, with the excruciating publicity. She explained that people nearly always misjudged her. A little impetuous, perhaps, and too prone to trust where there existed nothing trustworthy, but innocent—oh, so innocent! Carver listened. He almost believed.

It seemed wonderful, her dependence on him, her girlish deference to his opinion. "The poor boob thinks I oughtn't to wear the Yardley diamonds on the stage," she told her plain companion one day. She even acquiesced, rather gladly than otherwise, in Car-

ver's desire to keep their friendship a secret for the present. He waited to hear the announcement of his father's engagement or marriage. Quick as he had been to see the charm of Miss de Neyville, he did not lose sight of her inestimable value as a boomerang. Not yet.

He wrote letters. Every day he wrote, sometimes three times. "My tropic orchid," he called her, and racked his imagination for pet names that would make people yell with glee when the breach-of-promise case arrived. "Little pink-nailed lambie" was one of his best. In two weeks he sent her thirty-five letters like that.

Miss de Neyville put them in a neat pile, tied them with orchid satin ribbon, and kept every one. Carefully.

"As good as bank notes," she told the plain girl, who had become a bit plainer and more starry-eyed. Maybelle had said the same thing once of the Yardley jewels.

By the time he had written the thirty-fifth outpouring of soul, Endicott began to wonder whether, after all— It is dangerous for any young man, even a Bostonian, to get himself into that mood. Carver went on to the feeling that perhaps it was unkind to use Maybelle as a boomerang, a woman so beautiful and sensitive and that sort of thing. He grew hot at remembrance of his duplicity. This was on the day when she hinted, gently, at the existence of another admirer—an elderly man who seemed very, very fond of her, though they had met only a few days before.

"Which'd you take," she had already asked the plain girl, "the old one or the kid?"

"The old one," her companion had advised immediately.

Miss de Neyville had fathomed the answer in an instant.

"I believe you're slightly mashed on

young Endicott yourself," she had guessed shrewdly.

"Who wouldn't be?" the girl had answered lightly, though a cruel red had spread over her plain face. "But if he's too young for you——"

"Oh, is that so?" Miss de Neyville didn't like to be reminded of her age. "Well, he's too fussy for you."

The girl had accepted the remark in silence. She was accustomed to being unnoticed by men.

Miss de Neyville still felt mildly exhilarated by this tiff with the plain girl when she cautiously mentioned her elderly suitor to Carver, as they lunched discreetly that afternoon. Carver rose to the bait with a rush like that of a shark to a lump of pork.

"But, dearest——" he began.

And at that tense and tremulous moment, a clumsy waiter spilled the mayonnaise. It went plop! on Miss de Neyville's very perishable rose-silk frock.

"Damn you!" said Miss de Neyville, leaping to her feet.

Carver sat paralyzed. He had heard women say "damn" before this—Margaret often said it, for she had been to a fashionable young ladies' finishing school—but never had he heard a woman say it with just the whole-hearted coarseness that Miss de Neyville put into the word, as if it were the kind of word that belonged to her. In a flash he saw the sharp distinction between a lady and an adventuress, and with all his aching heart he longed to hear Margaret say, "Oh, damn!" again, in that dainty, high-bred, offhand manner of hers, when a tennis ball flew outside the court.

Thus, by a splash of mayonnaise, was Carver Elliott Endicott, third, saved from becoming Mr. Maybelle de Neyville, fourth. He gave the waiter five dollars and put Miss de Neyville into a taxi. The huntress noted with apprehension the unusual gun-shy manner of her quarry. She reloaded,

squinted along the sights, and put a delicate white finger on the trigger.

That is to say, she leaned out of the taxi window toward Carver, standing on the curb. She clasped Carver's unresponsive hand in a warm, soft palm. She thrust her scented, glorious, coppery head toward his. She looked into his troubled face with her languorous, shining, greenish eyes. She spoke in that low, rich, laughing voice.

"What were you going to say about that horrid old other man, Carver dear?" she asked ingenuously.

"That I wish him joy," replied Carver Elliott Endicott, third, in that tone and manner which makes the Boston summer so refreshing.

A rush of homesickness flooded Endicott's soul as he stood on the curb watching the taxi leap the crossings and vanish round a corner. He wanted to go back to God's country, out of this awful New York. He wanted to see Boston, where every one ate beans on Saturday night and mentioned the name of Endicott in reverent accents. He wanted a codfish ball. He wanted a big slice of brown bread. His trouble was largely digestive, for Maybelle had insisted on *hors d'oeuvres* and things steeped in mayonnaise. But it was partly cardiac, because, more than brown bread or fishballs or beans, he wanted—Margaret.

"M'ma!"

He could have cried out at the hurt of it.

Suddenly, as he remembered with what hushed tones the Boston peasantry uttered the name of Endicott, he realized what he had done to that name which was his father's and which was soon to be Margaret's. A breach-of-promise suit, with Maybelle de Neville as the complainant, with an Endicott as defendant! Pink-nailed lambie! Carver already could see Beacon Hill reel on its foundations.

"I've shown 'em a thing or two!"

he muttered in the lumberjack patois, and added that most vigorous of all Maine expletives: "By gosh!"

It will be seen that Carver was regrettably impenitent. The crowded courtroom, with Maybelle sobbing her heart out on the witness stand; her attorneys reading those "lambie" letters, while the spectators howled and the judge, even, had to smile; the smashing award of damages, which he would appeal, of course, just to keep the thing before the public—Carver longed for it all with a base and boastful longing. It couldn't come soon enough. He pictured his father's frantic attempts to buy Maybelle off. A fat chance, when, by bringing suit, she could get thousands of dollars in plunder and a million dollars' worth of publicity. One's heart isn't trampled on every day by an Endicott.

The young man grinned savagely as he started to walk back to his hotel. The shame of it—oh, the blazing, boiling, beautiful shame of it—this formed the one star in his night. "M'ma," hey? He laughed out loud. In fact, he couldn't have been more brazen if he had been born in Camden, or Chicago, or Philadelphia. The immediate past filled him with terrible delight, like a wrong grammatical tense. The immediate future—he hailed it, this perverted and vengeful youth, as he would have hailed a mixed metaphor in Emerson.

So drunk was he with the bright wine of his disgrace that, upon first entering the hotel, he failed to notice what the languid bell hop was calling: "Mr. Carver Endicott, please!" Carver awoke and wrested the card from the boy. It said: "Miss Ann Delaney," which meant nothing to him at all.

In the anteroom, whither the boy waved a negligent hand, the plain girl with the starry eyes darted toward him.

"Oh, Mr. Endicott, she's come back in a rage! And I've seen her do it

so often, and you weren't that kind at all——"

"In a rage, eh?" said Endicott, trying to hide his jubilation.

The plain girl nodded and gulped. Her starry eyes were fastened on Endicott's young face, and they were more than usually brilliant. But Endicott saw only a freckled, unattractive woman who seemed terribly flustered. No wonder, he thought, in face of the violent message which she had been told to deliver.

"And so," he prompted, "your mistress sent you——"

"My mother," the girl corrected, "by her first marriage. She doesn't like people to know, and—I don't like them to know, either. But I don't mind telling you, because—because——"

Again Endicott waited while the plain girl gulped.

"She went straight to her desk," Maybelle's daughter continued, "where she keeps your letters. Oh, Mr. Endicott, it seems terrible to tell you this!"

Endicott's very soul sang with bitter triumph.

"But why did she go for the letters?" he inquired, guileless as butter.

The plain girl crimsoned.

"Oh, Mr. Endicott! To show them to her lawyers."

"Why, this is awful! Awful!" said Carver, and added eagerly: "Is she still angry?"

A smile exalted the plain girl's face till it had almost her mother's charm. She stepped toward Carver with a little, unconscious, protecting gesture.

"Oh, Mr. Endicott, she's madder than ever! I had burned them!"

Carver jumped.

"All of them?" he demanded fiercely, catching the girl by the shoulder. "The pink-nailed one? All?"

She nodded shyly.

"Why?" groaned the man, overcome by the anguish of defeat. "Why? Why?"

"Y-you seemed like such a nice boy," answered the girl, and went away, wiping her eyes.

When he reached Lenox, early the next day, Margaret stood waiting on the station platform. Her face seemed a little pinched, and she did not speak as he came up.

"W-were you expecting me?" Endicott asked.

"In a way," Margaret replied, twisting her sunburned hands. "I generally come down here every day to—to see if there's any one I want to see. Where did your father find you?" And in answer to his look of surprise: "Or didn't he? We traced you to New York, and he went there a week ago."

At the "we," Carver's heart turned watery, but he nodded.

"Sorry to have worried you—m'ma,"

"Oh, don't!" said Margaret with a flash of tears. "Oh, Cahveh!"

"Oh, Mahgaret!" seemed the natural retort.

"C-come on over and get a vanillar sodar," the girl suggested with quick Bostonian self-control. People were beginning to notice. But on the wooded way to the "sodar" place, she caught at Carver's elbow. "I—don't want a sodar. I want that engagement ring."

The young man went through the proper motions, and when Margaret next spoke, it was in a muffled tone, from somewhere beneath his chin.

"I don't know how I could have thought, even for a moment—— Of course your father is splendid, but he and I aren't congenial. And when I read in the papeh what you did in Maine—you wonderful man!"

Endicott bowed his head, but had the wit to offer no explanation. Only, "I'm not worthy of you," he muttered, by way of salving his New England conscience.

"Rubbish!" laughed Margaret, rub-

bing his yellow hair the wrong way.  
"You're such a nice boy!"

He sighed. The sigh lifted his head enough for him to glimpse the rapid approach of a boy on a bicycle. Margaret sprang away just in time.

"Telegram," said the boy to Endicott, handing over a yellow envelope. "Station master just got it and chased me after you."

The recipient expressed his thanks in terms of cash, and watched the boy out of sight before turning to Margaret.

In a few moments, the girl spoke, again in the muffled voice which seemed to be growing habitual with her.

"The telegram, Cahveh? Your father went away awfully annoyed with me. P-probably it's from him."

But it wasn't. It read:

Took your advice. Married your father to-day. Wish us joy.

MAYBELLE.

Carver clutched his yellow hair in genuine horror.

"Great heavens!" he cried. "An Endicott!"



## A VISIT TO THE ASYLUM

ONCE from a big, big building

When I was small, small,  
The queer folk in the windows  
Would smile at me and call.

And in the hard, wee gardens

Such pleasant men would hoe!

"Sir, may we touch the little girl's hair?

It was so red, you know.

They cut me colored asters

With shears so sharp and neat;

They brought me grapes and plums and pears

And pretty cakes to eat.

And out of all the windows,

No matter where we went,

The merriest eyes would follow me

And make me compliment!

There were a thousand windows,

All latticed up and down;

And up to all the windows

When we went back to town

The queer folk put their faces,

As gentle as could be.

"Come again, little girl!" they called, and I

Called back, "You come see me!"

EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY.



# Whom the Sea Loves

By Clement Wood

THE man made his way forward, awkwardly adjusting his walk to the unfamiliar feel of the deck, buoyant above the unstable flood sloshing below. He gripped tightly the metallic smoothness of the railing and held himself upright, staring forward into the odd completeness of the seascape. Sky and sea were knit together; at the horizon point, there seemed to be no further space for the ship to cover.

He gave himself up to the ocean air, spraying him like a cool stream embodying all the salty, multiform essence of the deep. At first this reached him intellectually. What a vast improvement this was over the landlocked breeze that inched along dusty South Street, that feebly swept the lakeside drives of distant Detroit! How incredibly finer than the musty, squeezed atmosphere of his hotel near Times Square, or the solid reek of the burrowing subway! And then these comparisons blurred, faded, until he retained only a blank, unthinking delight in the whip and stimulus of the breeze lashing his face, a complacent surrender to the will of the wind. Then came the third, the rarest phase in man's enjoyment of the essence of the ancient, wonderful things. Gradually, unthinkingly, he became aware of a completer, more deeply rooted joy in the wind, coming from more than the present moment or his recollections of earlier experiences; something out of him, yet from before him; something remembered without having been felt; a racial memory, perhaps, long dozing or dead within him, now brought to life by the biting freshness of this breath of the Atlantic that drove through his spirit.

And then the girl came up to him, as he had somehow known that she would.

For a moment, he did not take his eyes from the blurred horizon. He knew just how she would look, the fresh profile to him, the gray eyes far out to sea, the mobile mouth curved into that comprehending smile which was her password to life.

"It—holds one, doesn't it?"

He turned abruptly to her. She continued to stare at the far dance of the restless rollers.

"Your first experience?"

He spoke hesitantly.

"I think so."

She faced him now, a tiny cloud of surprise roughening her forehead.

He looked down in irritation.

"Whatever prompted me to say that? It's my first trip, you know." His voice ended a bit uncertainly.

After a pause, she took him up, the note of bewilderment transferred to her voice:

"Odd your not being sure! Do you know, Larry, something of that doubt is in me? It's my first voyage, too, but it's all so familiar— I suppose descriptions— Or it isn't so unlike the Lakes."

He shook his head decidedly.

"It isn't that. It is familiar. Something in me has known it."

They moved forward, their steps timed rhythmically together, until they rounded the curving fore windows, and stopped, bathed in the bronzed glare of the setting sun.

"That sun, for instance, Chloe—I've seen it before that way." His voice dropped to an uncertain whisper. "And



not alone." He looked at her doubtfully, wondering if she would comprehend his fancy. Then he pointed jerkily toward it. "No, not just like that. I feel too high, here on the deck. And between me and the sun there were—things—things different—"

"Ropes? Things like that?"

The sudden flare of emotion caught him as well.

"How did you guess? Yes. It sank beyond crossed ropes. And there was a rocky shore close behind—" And then he looked her full in the face. "What nonsense we are talking! Come on. It must be time for dinner. This air makes me light-headed."

## II.

As the *Santa Elena* turned toward the sentinel rocks that were to the ancients the end of the known world, her engines pounded more freely, she seemed to leap through the curvetting swell. Now that the labyrinth of the danger zone had been safely threaded, the ship slid out of the impalpable web of caution that had clogged her running and pulsed her way under the guardian muzzles outjutting from lofty Gibraltar into the uneasy stretch of the Mediterranean.

An unexpected uptilt of the deck sent the girl unsteadily against him. Larry Harrick, mastering the forbidden shiver of emotion that came back the more strongly with each repression, stiffened his arm protectingly. She caught her balance; the delicate ocean tan in her cheeks deepened in intensity as she thanked him.

She stood watching his face, taut, intent, as he stared up at the heights curving behind and away from the ship's course. A sudden twinge crossed his face.

She was all alarm.

"Your heart again?"

"No indeed!" His rich laugh reas-

sured her. "Doctor said it might never worry me. Silly thing, isn't it? To think that some trifling inner breakdown should prevent my playing my part yonder at Salonica or in the lines in Picardy! 'Cardiac murmur' indeed! It sounds more like a grisly joke Fate was playing with me! Like old Tantalus—the chance so close, but the way closed to me!"

She puckered doubtful lips.

"It must be serious or they wouldn't have turned you down three times."

"It may never get me. Or," and he grinned exasperatingly, "I may flop under like one of those porpoises we passed—one flash in the sunlight, then — I did the next best thing, of course. And Red Cross work is good, if you can't get the other."

She frowned slightly.

"But your face twitched—"

"Just another fancy, quite as silly as the others—something about leaping overboard. It gets me on any high place. There was this odd thing about it—I seemed to be worried because my clothes weren't right." She smiled down at his flannels. "Not that way. I suddenly felt as if I should be wearing a flowing cloak, with bared knees and—"

"Scotch?"

He looked puzzled.

"Something like that. It's all vague."

"Queer our being on the same boat!"

She reverted to an often-discussed topic.

"I had planned the *St. Paul*, you know. Then came the delay. And if you'd gone next week, as you intended to—"

"I changed only at the last minute."

"Just as I turned into the main promenade, I saw you. I'd just come aboard. It was a sort of shock. I'd forgotten entirely that evening in Detroit, but I knew you were—known to me, somehow. Another thing, Chloe—just as I saw you, I noticed

for the first time that picture where the central stairway divides—that old sea fight, you know—rowers and galleys and all that.”

“Triremes,” she corrected him, her eyes quietly studying his face.

“Yes. It was familiar, too—connected somehow. It quite staggered me. I stared and stared. It’s been a nice trip, though an odd one.” He mused carelessly, his hand warmed by the touch of hers on the railing. “And you’re going out to your romance.”

“Hardly that, Larry. That part of the trip, the destination, seems the most unreal part of it all to me. It was so clear when I left home. It meant so much to come all these miles to marry Will, fighting all alone out there for the things that count.”

A wistful shadow softened his voice. “You love him—very much?”

The sun sparkled in her light laughter.

“Remember, I haven’t seen the man for five years! We thought it a great idea to write to the soldier boys, and when I found that Lieutenant Deason, of the Canadian Flying Corps, the second name on the list, was the Will Deason I’d gone to school with, naturally I chose him. It grew gradually, after that.”

He hesitated. She had not answered him directly. He did not say what he had intended.

“Deason’s a fine chap—a lucky chap.”

“You liked him?”

“One always likes fraternity brothers.”

“And then to cross the border and enlist as soon as the war began—Oh, I know he’s splendid!”

But there was a division in her mind as she said it. The sense of her pledged word was like a physical wall separating her from the man at her side, and yet there was something in the isolated proximity of the voyage that brought Larry Harrick closer to her than Will

Deason had ever been, even in her imagination. He felt something of the same mood, but his very realization that she might be willing to pass through the wall strengthened his protective feeling. He must guard her against her own yielding to the strange spell of sea wind and sea sun.

The foremost destroyer of the convoy flotilla bent in toward the shore; the steamer and its crowded attendants curved after.

“Look!” There was a flash of excitement in her face. “There against the shore—can’t you see them? Those shadowy forms of vessels—or is it just imagination?”

He peered intently.

“Like a dusky crescent of ships, you mean, in that dark inlet? It’s nothing but rocks and trees, of course, and yet I could swear that I can make out the low decks, the moldering beaks, the angled masts of a whole half circle of—triremes—” He stumbled over the unfamiliar word. “Look! The oars lift—”

The nearer promontory abruptly shut off the vision. They turned to each other, the light of other sunsets crimson in their eyes, and stared, speechless.

### III.

“This is the last night.”

His voice was flat, unhappy. All day long he had stayed morosely in his cabin, fighting out the battle. He had long ceased to hide the fact from himself—he was wholly captivated by Chloe Thoms; she had assumed a dominant place in his thinking and planning as no woman before her had ever done. Yet there was a seal of silence upon his lips that he determined not to break. It would be unfair to that third one waiting in the clustered tents at Salónica, that third one to whom she had promised herself.

He hardly looked at her during sup-

per, but his heart shook at the pallor of her face, the dumb misery that spoke through it. Cad that he was, to cause this suffering, however unintentionally! Must life always be such a criss-cross, where healthy desires no sooner began than they found themselves walled and fenced about with a blind tangle of prohibitions?

He passed a throbbing two hours in his cabin. Then he pulled on his ulster and went almost guiltily to the deck. He felt that he was giving way to the thing he was fighting against, but he told himself that he needed the sea air to clear out his wearied brain.

It was the halfway hour, when the day had gone and the feeble night was just beginning to strengthen to its intense dominance. Somewhere to port, he knew, was the stubby point of Gallo, unless they had passed it, and the sharper promontory of Matapan projected fingerwise toward Africa.

He had told himself that he would not be seen, but as soon as he saw the slim figure near the bow, he knew what he had expected. She came down the inclined deck, flitting so lightly as to give the illusion of flying.

"Oh, Larry, I'm glad you've come!" She came square up against him. His hands caught hers and held them tight; for one still instant, he felt the lithe imprint of her brushing him, as a leaf might be flung by wind against his face. Then she sheered off abruptly, dragging him after her. "It's our last night, you know. Let's not spoil it by being glum or anything!" There was a golden ripple of affection in her chuckle. "I'm no ogre, remember."

"Chloe—queen!"

The words seemed forced from his unwilling lips—rather from lips whose unwillingness was suddenly succeeded by a complete absence of volition.

Her laugh was a bit hysterical as she leaned to him.

Deliberately he held her close for a

breathless stretch of silence, then moved from her clasp. The slim arms slid helplessly to her side.

"Larry!" There was an ache in her voice that echoed only too truly his own feeling.

"I know. And it's not that it's wrong, Chloe. There's something in this place—these low-sprawling hills, these remembered havens, this torturingly sweet sea air—Oh, I remember every bit of it, as well as you!—that has made different people of us. The Chloe Thoms of to-day, the girl who is to marry William Deason next week"—she shrank from the lash of the unemotional words, then crept timidly toward him—"she wouldn't be willing to be here—now—with Larry Harrick. And God knows that he has too much respect for friendship and what's—decent—to feel the swelling sweep of passion— Oh, I can't say it!" He turned back to her slowly. "Let's be sensible, girl. This sea has bewitched us. We're mad with it. It's all so torturingly familiar. I've been through it all before—this soft night here, we two above the souging waters, some vague third one who kept us apart— But it's madness!"

Her hands pressed tight against her eyes; she half turned away, swaying slightly.

"I know."

"To-night we've been insane for a little. It's our last night of a wonderful, maddening voyage. Aren't we stronger than even its strength?" He deliberately walked over to her, casually shook her hand. "Good night—and a sound sleep until the sun's waking."

She went into the deeper obscurity of her stateroom, restless, uncertain. She did not dare see her drawn, hungry face in the mirrors. She did not light the light, but lay stretched on the fresh linen, pressing her face fiercely against

the starched roughness of the laced pillow cover.

#### IV.

The sudden shock that flung Larry Harrick bruisingly against the state-room wall beyond his bed dovetailed completely into his dream. He remembered, at the moment of waking, that he had told her to go ashore, and had taken his place on the stern deck, close beside the helmsman. In the bobbing light of the lanterns, the iron on the man's leather corselet gleamed darkly; the fetid odor of stale sweat came like a slow miasma from the straining oar benches below. His eyes peered painfully into the silent dark. Then the driven spray sound, the barked orders, the gleaming ram's head in the bow just grazing the lithe bulk that turned deftly away, and the grinding shocks beneath his feet that tilted the curved ship almost backward—

As the ship righted, he heard his watch go clattering across the floor, the crystal smashing with an exploding sound, and then the furious ringing of the electric bell beside his head. Reality emerged out of the dream. Suddenly he knew that it was the "torpedoed" signal that had hung like a hateful cloud over all of the dragging trip.

He found his feet. The ship's floor listed horribly. The light would not flash on; a long minute's fumbling with the switch assured him that it was not his fingers that were at fault. His face stung from the blow of the wall. He beat his spirit savagely into a semblance of calm, and dressed in a swift and hazy deliberation.

The steward's frightened voice boomed through the corridor without: "Everybody on deck! Everybody on deck!"

The passageways were dark, except for kerosene lamps at unfamiliar points. The ship's leaning made these blacken

the half of their chimneys and smoke somberly. He collided with figures blundering about in frenzied restraint. At last he found the deck, his left hand clutching the valuables walleted in his vest pocket, his right holding the life preserver that he had torn from its dusty canvas straps over his bed.

A glaring petty officer charged into him furiously as he stared stupidly around.

"What you holding that life belt for? Put it on, you damned ass!"

He stopped his bellowing abruptly, turned, and rushed away, pushing a disquieting passage through the eddying dark figures huddled near the forward life boats.

"Easy there! Let her go!"

Larry heard the slap as the first boat hit the water, the shower of spray that pattered against the ship's side. He looked over the railing dreamily. Four of the seats in the boat, he noticed, were empty.

A second boat got away with a full load. There were screams from below the next davits, where one clutch had held too long, and dim figures pelted wildly into the swirl below. He had a sickening sense of widening ripples where one stiff form sliced under and did not reappear; the odd sense of painful familiarity gripped him again at the sight.

He felt a strange absence of alarm, as if he were merely a spectator in the scene of midget turmoil and upset. Over the angry froth of tumultuous waves came flashes, then the crackling booms which told that the destroyers of the convoy were in action. The ship listed further and further; he could hear tearing, grinding sounds below, as parts of the machinery broke loose and ripped through their surrounding walls as if they had been flimsiest paper.

The women, then the last of the men passengers, were quickly stowed into

the boats. The surge of madness that had almost overcome him earlier in the evening possessed him wholly; he felt lifted above the scene. He backed into the shadows at the stern, oddly intent on watching all of the murky panorama. He cleared from his throat the heavy odor of burning wood, breathing deeply the salt air. Then came the final call for the last boat. He woke to the danger of being left, and started running, panicky and unnerved. He saw that he was not yet noticed; his throat opened to shout, but no sound came forth. Where was Chloe—the slim, dusky spirit of this place?

With terrible rapidity, his brain moved. Sent her ashore? No—that was false consolation from the queer dream. Where was she? He had seen the launching of each lifeboat; she had not been in any of them. She must be in her cabin, then. He doubled back, stumbling through the wild welter that had been the trim corridor, hardly stopping to let his mind register the fitful flaming on the floor where an exploding lamp had fired the varnished woodwork. Here was the last turn, here her stateroom; the door was open, the room empty!

He climbed out more slowly, balancing on the steep floorway, an unreasoning certitude of safety sweeping caution from him. He made his way along the sharp angulation of the higher deck, sure that somewhere the shadows held what he was seeking. He heard with grim pleasure the plash of oars hollowly drawing away from the settling ship. Now they were alone in the universe.

As he reached the raised bow, he saw a slim darkness against the deeper background of sky and sea.

"Chloe!"

She came smilingly to him; her hands toyed with the unfamiliar life preserver. He slipped it over and fastened it. A

wild exhilaration held them, novel and yet oddly natural.

Swiftly, instinctively, he took her in his arms and stood poised upon the deck sinking slowly toward the phosphorescent froth below. He felt that his unstable footing was the surest throne in the world. Somehow he was making a symbolic votive offering of them both to the deities of the sea that had brought them here together and had flung them so cordially into each other's arms.

Insensibly the present moment merged back into the fled dream. His lips formed strange syllables, and then:

"Chloe!"

"Ion!"

There was nothing strange in her loving accent.

Then, lifting her high, pushing back against the woodwork with a sturdy spring that sent him clear of the unsettled swirl below, he plunged into the seething water.

## V.

"How much of it is dream?"

She asked the question with slow iteration, as she curled across his body on the fragile upturned rowboat which drifting chance had sent ultimately bobbing near by, long after he had come up from that first deep plunge. The crowded sea was deserted; the great hulk of the gutted *Santa Elena* slid softly into the blackness even as they watched it; and, except for indistinguishable wreckage that washed near, then vanished in the obscurity, the avid water was unpeopled. The destroyer flotilla, the unseen enemy, the scattering lifeboats, all were gone. Then had come this inverted craft, and after arduous wooing of its sliding upturned surface, he had got her onto the perilous haven and clambered beside her.

He watched her in perplexity. The tide seemed setting straight out to sea; somehow he knew, yet did not know

how he knew, that the black mass they had drifted past first was the shaggy outline of Cape Krio, and that Cos lay in the dim murk to starboard. Pass it—and there seemed no way to reach it—and the dark seaway menaced them on all sides.

His answer to her question came slowly:

"Can we be two people, each of us, at the same time? It's no dream that I was Laurence Harrick and you Chloe Thoms. Yet it is no dream, surely, that I am Ion," and a triumphant arrogance spoke in his voice, "commander of the shield trireme *Coronis*, the Curved One, in the glorious navy of the queen your mother. It is no dream that you are Chloe—my Chloe. Are these things now, or are they but memories of yesterday? Surely they live."

She spoke as softly as the rolling grayness around them.

"We dreamed the same dream as the ship was struck. Surely it can be no dream! You remember my coming down to the trireme after the dusk—"

"I remember all of it! How Artemisia, your mother, had threatened to imprison you if you saw me again; for she laid this war with the Rhodians to the fact that you looked with kind eyes on me, and turned from that Laon of Rhodes whose triremes came in the night against us."

She chanted softly:

"Ah, lovely is Halicarnassus by the sea, and lovely the gleaming halls of my mother, but lovelier the rippling floor of the Gulf of Cos, the skin-covered deck of the flying Curved One, and your smile waiting with your heart for me!"

He seized her arms abruptly.

"We were in the deck house, you remember, the low Pleiades shedding their radiance over us, and your lips murmured the rosy passion of her of Lesbos, when the watch ship came——"

"I remember! The bireme from Cape Krio!"

He laughed gently.

"Faithless one! I sent you ashore, for I knew the danger. And you obeyed me?"

She shuddered against him.

"I am afraid," she whispered, "all afraid! Ugh! The wild clash of the ships in the hideous night—the shrieks of the drowning—the clang of the arms—— Ion, Ion, comfort me!"

He smoothed the sea-damped hair that hung loose from its fastenings in a moist coil behind her; he smoothed away the sudden anguish.

"It's all over now, dear of my heart. You were gone, you know——"

"I was in the deck house, hiding, waiting for you!"

"I know, I know. I passed the word to the ships. We curved into the harbor, doubtful of what hidden horror might come out of the night's womb. An attack at night! We had heard of it, but never had ship of Halicarnassus fought other than under the honest sun of day. There had been a round moon, you remember, but Artemis, angered, maybe, at her namesake's cruelty to you, hid her face behind shrouding squall clouds. I remember clambering along the outer gangway, to see that all the rowers were in place. Their hearts were stout, and above them the marines came to their stands, silently polishing their bronzed shields or edging their keen spearheads. Clear to the bow I went, and under the high goose head to the bronze ram whose curling horns had crashed many a trireme's cracking sides into the watery underworld—and even a Tyrian quadrireme, when we swept the inland sea of the outer marauders.

"All was well. The ram's head waited, and the stiff beak jutted below. I patted the carmined cheeks of my Curved One, and asked Poseidon for sight for her eyes in the blinded night.



I came back on the nether side and spoke words of cheer to the waiting men. Then the covering of felt was raised over the higher rowers, and the strong hide awning stretched taut, lest grappling irons or hurled stones fall among the marines. At last all was ready."

"Ah, Ion, I, waiting in the deck house, heard all! And my prayers to Artemis and to Aphrodite Nike rose like clouds toward the clouded moon."

"They could not change the wrath of the gods. Out into the stream we moved and waited. The last light flickered out, the ships crouched, alert, to tear the foe. Out of the darkness we heard the measured sound of the lashed spray. The rowers bent darkly gleaming backs to their tasks. The sky lighted. I saw the head vessel make for the Curved One.

"Ram!" My command shattered the silence. We turned and plunged straight for her. The beak ripped loose her under planking. Then the solidier crash, as our ram's head struck and glanced from her. You saw, Chloe. She was a bireme. She turned quickly and——"

"I saw, I saw!" Her eyes gleamed like twin stars in the dimness.

"She bent away from us, not disabled. And then—ah, gods!—the tearing crash beneath me! The second ship ran her beak, straight and strong, into the tense vitals of the Curved One."

"How she quivered! I was flung over the benching——"

He gripped her arms, his eyes staring strangely over the sea.

"Deep into us plunged the sharp beak, and then the three-pronged spur, the ram's head in its center, caught us amidship, hurling us back from the beak; else the enemy ship would have been dragged beneath with us—as would the gods had happened! Before my eyes writhed the stuck oarsmen, a dreadful sight. To right and

left the others plunged into the sea. After them the marines. They sank, helpless in their armor, into the thrashing sea. Then the fireballs, flung on our very deck! I caught and threw back the first——"

"I saw you—a Zeus hurling lightning!"

He laughed savagely.

"My hand charred at its touch, but it went back to their deck. Then—too many. Beside me, the helmsman stood. He dove splendidly into the swirl; his gleaming arms waved at me as he swam clear. And then—and then——"

Her voice took it up:

"Then I was beside you! You turned to me, there on the wreck of your ship, and scarved your arms around me. Queer—at that moment a flighty land breeze brought the smell of flowers to us! Then, holding me high above your head, we sought together the bosom of the sea."

After a moment, he began again, his face gray with the first color of the dawn:

"You remember those two boats crashing above our heads? A mighty moment! Then they passed beyond. We mounted that floating rowers' bench and drifted on, on, outward, until shaggy Cape Krio was passed and the bulk of stately Cos——"

"And the rollers washed higher and higher, and the gray dawn broke——"

They stared grayly at each other.

"And that was all?" He spoke, and she nodded. He went on, "And that was all, until this day! The sea took us to its bosom then. And lo, now it has returned us to each other! Look how the morning breaks! And there! A ship?"

The incredulous whisper spoke a reality. One of the cruising convoy flotilla had sighted them, and before they could measure the lapse of time, they were walking unsteadily along its firm and welcoming decks.

## VI.

They passed out of the trim headquarters' building together. There was a glow in their whole bearing that made the soldiers stare after them.

As soon as they had left the curious observers, she turned to him, her hands holding his tightly.

"We didn't have to tell him, Larry. He could see by looking at us!"

The man spoke quietly:

"He always was a decent chap."

Then he held her off from him for a moment, intent on the perfect features, the cool sea-gray eyes, like the dawn over a gray sea.

"Now!" he said. But before he kissed her, he smiled whimsically. "And I've waited two thousand years for this!"



## TO GRACE

NO marble shaft should rise for you,  
No monuments of grief and pain.  
Your tears were sweet as morning dew,  
Your sorrows passed like summer rain.

Your laughter was a gracious chime  
Of golden bells. Like banners flung,  
Your youth shone out in perfect prime,  
And loveliness about you clung.

Red roses shine out fair for you!  
Red roses, sweet with springtime's showers,  
Fragrance, in beauty's fairest hue—  
My gracious queen of all the flowers!

Perhaps, in some cathedral town,  
A great rose window, set on high,  
May catch the sunlight streaming down,  
And shed your presence from the sky.

Perhaps in noblest music, when  
I weep, wrung by too perfect art,  
The glory of your voice again  
May wake the echoes in my heart.

Comfort me, through the hours of fire,  
Till I shall climb the misty stair,  
And find the land of Heart's Desire,  
And clasp my own dear sweetheart there.

CHARLES AGNEW MACLEAN.

November 15, 1918.



# More Super-Women

By Anice Terhune

Hortense Mancini:

The Butterfly Siren

Nay, never ask this week, fair lord,  
Where they are gone, nor yet this year,  
Except with this for an overword—  
But where are the snows of yesteryear?  
—*Ballad of Dead Ladies.*

A CROWD of ragamuffins clamored threateningly around four frightened and richly dressed young gallants, in the market square of Aix-les-Bains. Fists were shaken, and clods of earth were hurled at the quartet. One of the four—a dashing handsome, slender youth—was the special target for yells and missiles.

A soldier, newly returned to town from the Italian wars, paused to watch the lively little riot. Noting the pallor and very evident fright of the handsome youth, the soldier said sneeringly to him:

"Why don't you pull out that jeweled sword of yours and carve some of them to ribbons? Be a man!"

"I can't be a man," the cavalier made nervous answer. "I wish I could! I've often wished it. You see, I'm only a woman."

The scared speaker was, for once, telling the truth—but not all the truth. She was not only a woman—she was a super-woman. In brief, she was Hortense Mancini.

Hortense started out in life with advantages such as fall to few super-women. Most of our sirens, you remember, have sprung from the gutter

and risen to fame on wings of their own clever making. Hortense could and would have done this, but it was not necessary. She was saved from all the anxious, dreary beginnings and strivings that come to her kind.

She was born under a lucky star, at the time when her uncle, the mighty Mazarin, prime minister of France, was at the zenith of his crooked power. From the first, Hortense was Mazarin's favorite niece. She was far more lovely, even as a child, than any of her five sisters, and she had the sweetest disposition of the lot. The crafty Mazarin singled her out for especial favor.

The small Mancinis were surrounded by intrigue and deceit, and grew up without any sort of moral sense. They led their uncle a dance. He found the turbulent children harder to manage than the kingdom of France, and he was harsh with them one moment, only to indulge them the next.

Hortense's brother, Philip, the Duc de Nevers, who had expected to become his uncle's heir, was brainless and vicious, always writing foolish verse and getting into scrapes. One escapade, fringed with blasphemy, made his pious uncle disinherit him. Mazarin then declared Hortense his heir.

Immediately her stock boomed. The tale of her presumptive wealth brought a host of suitors to her feet. Her dark

Italian beauty kept them there. Not that she needed the lure of money to make men her slaves, for already she was the heroine of no less than nine heartbreaks.

Among her early wooers was Charles, Prince of Wales—afterward King Charles II. of England. It was no novelty for Charles to fall in love, but it was a decided novelty for him to ask any woman to be his wife, as he besought Hortense to be. He was tremendously in love, and twice begged Mazarin to give him the little superwoman's hand in marriage. Mazarin committed almost the only diplomatic blunder of his career in refusing to consider the match. But for this, Hortense would have been Queen of England.

Yet there was some excuse for Mazarin's refusal. Charles at the time was nothing but a down-at-heel exile, living at The Hague, with no prospect of ever becoming anything more important than a king without a country. So Mazarin decided against him—and thus pushed a throne from beneath the feet of his pet niece.

Hortense herself was not bothering much about a prospective husband—she was having too good a time. The young King Louis XIV. was her ardent adorer. The Prince of Portugal was mad about her, and so were the Duke of Savoy and the great Turenne. But Mazarin, out of gratitude to the memory of his mentor, Richelieu, finally gave her to Richelieu's nephew—Amande de la Porte de la Milleraye. Besides winning Hortense, the bridegroom gained the title of "Duc de Mazarin" and thirty million francs.

The uncle's wedding gift to Hortense was ten thousand pistoles in gold. Always generous, she shared this with her brothers and sisters. Young, beautiful, a madcap by nature, her exuberant spirit carried her into the wildest extravagances. Her husband—who in-

terested her just at first because he was a novelty—proved to be an eccentric crank, and she soon decided that he was not even worth thinking about. Here she was wrong.

The honeymoon over, she became bored to death, and from sheer ennui she used to amuse herself by leaning from her window and flinging gold coins on the heads of the crowd. Mazarin, a monument of stinginess, was literally driven to his grave by such proceedings. He died eight days after he heard about the gold flinging.

When he had breathed his last, his dutiful nieces and nephews exclaimed: "God be thanked, the old kill-joy's gone!"

As was to be expected, Hortense's married life was one unending row. The duc seems to have been without a redeeming trait. He was not only a crank, but he was unspeakably ugly. Madame de Sévigné says:

"The mere sight of him was a justification of his wife's conduct."

Added to that, he was always scolding Hortense for her madcap ways. He was a prude of the worst type. His "sense of decency" was offended by the superb pictures and statues in the Palais Mazarin, which was now his home. In spite of Hortense's fierce efforts to stop him, he proceeded to carve up the more daring Titians and Correggios and to smash the nude statues with a hammer. The whole court was furious at this. The king protested. But it was no use. The duc had lent Louis money, and the profligate king might need another loan before long; so Mazarin kept right on smashing art treasures to his heart's content. He would have been in his element in the German ranks during the present war.

The duc was also a religious maniac, and used to swear that he was haunted by evil spirits fighting for his soul. His wife's dazzling beauty was a torment to him. In his eyes she was the incar-

nation of fleshly lure. He dared not let her out of his sight.

Furiously jealous of every man who entered her presence, he dismissed all her young lackeys and surrounded her with the ugliest and oldest servants he could find. He objected to her pretty clothes, and kept her from society as much as possible. He preached long sermons to her on the evils of going to the theater.

By way of adding variety to her days, he dragged his young wife from province to province, in all sorts of weather and seasons, forcing her to sleep in peasants' huts and ramshackle sheds, or to lodge for weeks in some lonely castle, where there was no one to be seen and nothing whatever to do. He also had a mania for lawsuits, and nearly always lost them.

The wretched married life of the Mazarins became a huge standing joke at court. Lampoons on it convulsed all Paris. Hortense writhed under the ridicule. But, all things considered, she played the game marvelously, even when the duc squandered most of her fortune under her very eyes. She protested, on behalf of her children, but that was all the good it did. Next, Mazarin seized her jewels, on the ground that it was "necessary to discourage vanity and wickedness." As a crowning atrocity, he attempted to take her by force to Alsace, to spend the rest of her life. This was too much. Hortense ran away to her brother, the Duc de Nevers.

Society declared itself horrified at such unconventionality. In that age, a husband's power over his wife was supreme. Hortense's outraged sisters and the courtiers and even the king pestered her to return to her cur of a husband. But she had had quite enough.

"I've emerged from seven years of hell," she sobbed. "Would you have me go back?"

The deserted duc had her arrested and thrown into a convent prison. She retaliated by a demand for funds, an allowance, and a separation. While this suit was pending, Hortense, freed from the horror of associating with her villainous husband, felt her old joyous spirit stirring once more. She found a boon companion in Sidonie, Marquise de Courcelles—another victim of an insupportable husband—and together they played all sorts of pranks and jokes on the gentle nuns, in regular schoolgirl fashion.

Then Hortense won her suit. She was released from the convent. The duc, more determined than ever, appealed the case, but his wife was not as helpless as she had been. With her returning exuberance had come back all the power and charm which had been temporarily crushed by her husband's maniac cruelty. Her interest in life revived. Adorers came flocking to her standard.

While the duc was trying his best to regain control of Hortense, she was busily falling in love with the Chevalier de Rohan. Rohan, who was willing to cut off his head for her if necessary, entered into a conspiracy to get her out of reach of Mazarin.

Dressed as a boy, she fled with him from the Palais Mazarin. The duc, insane with fury, demanded a *lettre de cachet* from the king, empowering him to send the elopers to the Bastille. Armed with this, he gave instant chase, but Hortense and Rohan were too quick for him.

They scampered across the border and reached Neufchatel in safety. After a wildly adventurous journey through Switzerland, they finally came to Milan, where Hortense's sister Marie—now wedded to Constable Colonna—took them in. She could do no less, for she owed a debt of long standing to Hortense. Years before, Hortense had handed over King Louis'

wounded heart to Marie, and had obligingly acted as go-between for the lovers, carrying messages, arranging meetings, and playing the part of good sister and confidante. Hence Marie's willingness to undergo family rebuke by taking the lovers under her roof, regardless of scandal.

Scandal there was, in plenty. But Hortense cared very little. She and Rohan were having a gorgeous time together. They decided to tour Italy in company with the Colonnas and the Duc de Nevers.

The pleasure jaunt was hardly a success. Out of respect to the memory of the old Mazarin, the pope refused to recognize his niece. Other influential people followed suit. Presently Hortense found herself penniless, and palmed off first on one and then on another of her Italian relatives. She was obliged to pawn the few small jewels that remained to her, in order to live. She returned to France, whimsically taking six months for the journey, which was supposed to be a flight.

Arrived at her brother's home, she was promptly arrested, by her husband's order, and chucked into the Abbey of Lys. Frantic, she sent an appeal to the king, reminding him of their youthful affair and of her aid to him in his intrigue with Marie. Louis could not resist her pleadings. He commanded her release. She reentered Paris under escort and was taken before the king. The latter tried to persuade her to return to her husband, but Hortense would not consider it for a moment. Finally an arrangement was made whereby the duchesse went back to Italy with an income, from Mazarin, of twenty-four thousand francs.

"She will eat up her whole annuity at the first inn," said Lauzun, Minister of Finance.

Hortense hurried to her sister Marie, at Rome. Here she found things in a pretty mess. Marie had quarreled with

her husband and was on the point of leaving him.

"I'll go along!" said Hortense gayly. "I ought to know how it's done by this time!"

Again she donned boy's clothes and hustled her trembling sister into a suit like her own. Their maids they tricked out in the same way. Looking for all the world like a band of students, the party made their escape at dead of night and got as far as Civita Vecchia.

Here a boat was supposed to be waiting for them, but when they arrived, at two o'clock in the morning, no boat was there. Finally, after frantic search, it was found five miles away, and the fugitives hurriedly clambered aboard.

After eight days on the water—during which time they were lost in a storm and chased by Turkish pirates—they landed near Marseilles. Here they were met by the Marquis de Villeroi. Villeroi, by the way, is chiefly known to history from his famous speech, made when Prince Eugene of Austria drove him and his army helter-skelter out of Cremona. The poor marquis babbled despondently:

"I have lost my men. My men have lost me. And we both seem to have lost Cremona!"

Hortense and Villeroi and Marie and the Duke of Lorraine—a flame of Marie's—traveled joyously through Provence, the center of scandalous stories wherever they went. The girls found boys' clothes much more to their liking than their ordinary attire, and were loath to give them up.

At Aix-les-Bains, their rank and their unconventional dress roused the town. They were surrounded by a mob of scoffing, jeering people, who threatened to whip them at the tail of a cart or to put them in a lunatic asylum. Things were looking decidedly bad for the four runaways when the governor's wife, Madame de Grignan, took pity on



them and sent them some women's clothing.

"You travel like all true heroines of romance," she said, "with abundance of jewels, but no clean linen."

Through her they also learned that Mazarin's police were on their track. So they deemed it best to break up the happy party. Hortense and Villeroi slipped across the frontier to Chambéry, where Hortense's old admirer, the Duc de Savoy, gave them shelter.

The butterfly super-woman had grown tired of Villeroi's devotion during their gay weeks together, and, having no further need of him as a traveling companion, she now sent him packing with scant ceremony.

Savoy, though married for some years, had never ceased to love Hortense, and now laid siege to her heart with redoubled fervor. His infatuation increased daily. Fearing to lose her, he surrounded her with every luxury he could think of.

While their intrigue lasted, she enjoyed one of the few peaceful eras of her life. She developed a hitherto undreamed-of taste for literature, philosophy, and art. Happy, indolently pleasure loving, she seemed to have sailed into calm waters at last.

But, as ever, a crowd of lovers besieged her, and before long one of them threatened to win her away from poor old Savoy.

The Prince Charming was Cæsar Vischard. He was steeped to the lips in vice.

While Hortense was trying to choose between him and Savoy—balancing the two on her finger, so to speak—the question was decided for her by the sudden death of the duc. In the midst of her grief, word came to her that the duc's wife knew of the entanglement and was vowing vengeance. Hortense never waited for trouble to come to her. She believed in getting away from it as fast as possible. So she stopped

grieving for the duc and fled with Vischard.

They crossed the North Sea to England, in a terrific storm, and made their way to the Duchess of York—Mary of Modena—Hortense's cousin by marriage.

King Charles, always on the lookout for a lovely face, succumbed at once and renewed his old attachment.

Hortense was now thirty. But she did not look her age within ten years. The last seven years of her life had been spent principally in roaming around dressed as a lad, and her figure had gained a boyish grace and a freedom of movement that were bewitching.

Forneron writes:

"The Duchess de Mazarin was one of those Roman beauties in whom there is no doll prettiness and in whom nature triumphs over all the arts of the coquette. Painters would not say what was the color of her eyes. They were neither blue nor gray, nor yet black nor brown nor hazel. Nor were they languishing, as if either demanding to be loved or expressing love. They simply looked as if she had basked in love's sunshine.

"If her mouth was not large, it was not a small one, and was suitably the fit organ for intelligent speech and amiable words. Her complexion was softly toned, and yet warm and fresh. It was so harmonious that, though dark, she seemed of beautiful fairness. Her jet-black hair rose in strong waves above her forehead as if proud to clothe and adorn her splendid head. All her motions were charming in their easy grace and dignity. She did not use scent."

The French ambassador, who was hopelessly enslaved by her, poured out his heart in this fashion:

"She is thirty; and yet, to all appearance, a finely developed young girl. I never saw any one who so well defies the power of time and vice to disfigure.

When she arrives at the age of fifty, she will have the satisfaction of thinking, when she looks in the mirror, that she is as lovely as she ever was in her life."

Charles II. lost no time in giving her a suite of apartments in St. James' Palace, and a pension of four thousand pounds a year. With such a start, she was soon a power at court and in the middle of court intrigue.

Louise de Querouailles, you will remember, was the reigning favorite at this time. Hortense was not used to playing second fiddle to any one—least of all to another woman. So she went—in a spirit of mischief, perhaps, as much as anything else—after Louise's scalp—and nearly got it. The people hated Louise. Her popularity with the king wavered.

It was Hortense's great opportunity. She reached out confidently to grasp the prize—and then, in the heyday of her favor, her heart got the better of her head. The Prince of Monaco arrived on the scene, and she flung herself into his outstretched arms, regardless of consequence. He came to London on a visit of two months—and for her sake he stayed two years.

Cheerfully she dashed her hopes, her fortune, her ambition to the ground—and deemed them well lost for love. Power was never her goal—only happiness. And she and her prince were beatifically happy.

Vischard, heartbroken, left England, which was the wisest thing he could have done. The king, in a fury, stopped her pension, but Hortense bewitched him back to friendliness. He renewed the pension, and he and she remained the best of friends as long as he lived.

Mazarin, hearing of this, flew into a rage, and sent word to Charles that he considered such a woman valueless.

"Quite so," said Charles to the mes-

senger, with a cynical laugh. "I do not ask for a receipt."

The next ten years were the most brilliant of Hortense's career. The king, always her friend, gave her many favors, the English people paying for them. She now found time to cultivate the taste in art and letters that she had picked up in Savoy. She read everything of value she could lay her hands on. Her favorite authors were Tacitus, Appian, and Vergil. She gleaned ideas from the clever men around her, and founded a glittering salon, where her maxim: "Who enters here leaves spite and ill will behind," was carried out to the letter.

Hortense's heart was good and tender at core, and in spite of her utter disregard of morals and the stormy years she had passed through, she remained as warmly sunshiny as her native Italian skies. Nowhere else in London was there such unclouded pleasure as at the Duchesse de Mazarin's. Men of distinction flocked to her doors—poets, painters, and literati. Among them were the poet Waller, the Earl of Rochester, and—last and best—Charles de Marquetel de St. Evremond.

St. Evremond was the wittiest, gayest, best educated, most sincere, and most charming of her adorers. When she came to England, he was thirty years her senior, but from that day until the day of her death, the upright, acid-tongued old philosopher was her devoted friend—the one clean, honest attachment in her life. Let us set it to her credit.

Hortense used, wickedly, to call him her "old satyr." He was known as "Evremond the Wit." A soldier in the Thirty Years' War, he was bravest of the brave, and the cleverest swordsman in the army. Of Hortense's salon, he wrote:

"The greatest freedom in the world is to be seen there, and an equal dis-

cretion. Everybody is more commodiously served at Madame de Mazarin's than at home, and more respectfully than at court. 'Tis true, there are frequent disputes, but then it is more with knowledge than with heat. What they game for is inconsiderable, and as they only play for diversion, you cannot discover in their faces either the fear of losing or the annoyance of having lost."

Then came a new enemy to trouble Hortense's peace. The old Mancini weakness—gambling—began to take hold of her. Morin, a shady croupier, driven out of Paris, came over to London and introduced "*basset*." The game became the rage. Hortense played night and day. Soon her money had all melted, and she was buried in debt. St. Evremond was the only one of her creditors whom she ever repaid.

Then came the most tragic experience of her whole temperamental career. Baron Banier, a handsome, romantic, hot-headed boy, arrived in London and fell hopelessly in love with Hortense—now in her fortieth year. Her young nephew, the Chevalier de Soissons, came to visit his beautiful aunt. Disgusted by the sight of Banier's love, he challenged the baron to a duel.

Banier died on the field, glorying in the cause of his death. The chevalier refused to flee.

He was arrested and tried, but Hortense, by wire pulling, managed to get him free.

"I could not have believed it possible," wrote Madame de Sévigné, "that the eyes of a grandmother could have wrought such havoc!"

Hortense was crushed. She closed her house. She had her salon hung in black and would see no one but St. Evremond. Troubles began to pile up.

Drink, debt, and her troubles brought on a serious illness. With recovery, she became her old self and lost her

taste for stimulants. She was more beautiful than ever. Her salon was again crowded with wit and fashion. Then came King Charles' death. Hortense shed floods of tears over the loss of the careless, good-natured friend, whose queen she might have been.

James II. continued her pension, but his reign was brief, and his supplanter, William of Orange, cut the allowance in two. Her half-mad husband now enlivened things by bringing suit to seize her share in her uncle's fortune.

Wherever she went, St. Evremond and a little court of admirers were in attendance. But her day was done. The night was falling. It was in the summer of 1699 that the final break in her health told of the end.

"Death has long lost its terrors for me," she whispered, with characteristic cheerfulness. "It is the welcome friend who will bring me the first real rest I have ever known."

But death did not at once bring to her tired body the "rest" she had promised it. Her creditors, mindful of her husband's wealth, seized Hortense's body. Mazarin, stricken with tardy remorse, was compelled to pay them a heavy ransom before the superwoman's remains were allowed to leave England.

When at last he gained possession of the body, he could not make up his mind to bury it. For more than a year he carried the heavy leaden coffin about with him from one of his estates to another.

"Once," says St. Simon, "he suffered it to rest for a short time in the Church of Notre Dame de Liesse, where the peasants treated it as that of a saint, and touched it with their beads. At last he took it to Paris and buried it beside Hortense's uncle, the miserly prime minister, in the Church of the College des Quatres Nations—now the Palais de l'Institut."



# The Golden Girl

By Emily H. Callaway

**K**EITH BRONSON hated women. He hated them with all the strength and virility of all his thirty-three years. The so-called clinging vine was his pet aversion, but the suffragette appealed to him even less. One and all, they were just a necessary evil, and he'd be jolly glad if they'd quit bothering and leave him alone.

Being an unmarried citizen with rather more than his share of attractiveness, good looks, and this world's goods, very naturally he could not possibly have his wish. The gentle sex continued to annoy him. And thereby hangs a tale.

On a certain balmy September afternoon, Keith Bronson settled himself in the parlor car of the Maine Special. He was tired out, tired in every bone of him, and the prospect of a month with nothing to think about stretched alluringly ahead of him. Hunter's Lodge, deep in the Maine woods, was very apt to see Keith in late September, but this year it was only under doctor's orders that he had come.

Unable to don the khaki, because of a knee that insisted on slipping out of its socket at the most inconvenient times, ever since that memorable 40-0 football victory at New Haven, Keith had been serving his government in every other possible way. The big factories that he had inherited from his father were turning out nothing but munitions. His yacht, the apple of his eye, had been given at once as a speed boat. And since they wouldn't let him, by hook or crook, serve in the trenches, he was working eighteen hours out of the twenty-four in the ordnance, with

his big New York offices made into inspection rooms for a branch of that department.

For months, Keith had given every ounce of his splendid young brain and vitality, and now he had been ordered away on furlough—ordered to forget everything connected with the war and rest.

As he opened a magazine, something he hadn't read in months, some one slapped him heavily on the back.

"Hello, old chap! Back to the old stamping ground, eh?"

It was Carl Eberle, an acquaintance of college days.

"Yes," answered Keith. "You seem to be bound that way yourself."

He rather hoped Eberle wasn't. Keith had never cared for him, although he played a corking good game of tennis and was always agreeable.

"Oh, I've been up at the Lodge more or less all summer," Eberle answered, and sat down on the arm of the next chair. Keith hoped he'd be uncomfortable enough to move on. He didn't like Eberle, and that was all there was to it.

"Guess there won't be much doing up here now. 'Most every one's across."

"Lucky dogs!" answered Eberle. "Almost wish I'd been in the draft age myself. Then I would have had to go, business or no business."

Keith recalled that Eberle hadn't always been so keen on business. But he hadn't seen much of him in late years, and evidently things were flourishing. He knew that Eberle owned three cars now, instead of one.

After a few more desultory remarks, Eberle left and found his own chair,

halfway up the car. Keith turned back to his magazine.

And then the trouble began.

Of course it was a girl—a fluffy, blue-gray-eyed girl, a hopelessly pretty girl that you couldn't keep your eyes off of. And of course she had to sit just two chairs from Keith, across the aisle.

Eberle promptly swung around; Keith noticed that. He himself deliberately turned his chair away and became oblivious of the world in his magazine. Women were out of his scheme of existence.

And then, of course, he began promptly wondering about the one across the aisle. That was the deuce of it—you always began by wondering. Every new face presented such wonderful possibilities—that never panned out. Somewhere, quoth the fairy tales, there was a golden girl, a girl waiting for every man jack of us. Keith had wondered—but he had never wondered long. As the girl's interest grew, his had always waned. And no one yet had even faintly resembled a golden girl. So he had decided to stop wondering.

Of course this girl had a dog—quite the silliest dog Keith had ever seen. Under no conditions could you call it an honest-to-God dog, which was probably why they hadn't made her put him in the baggage car. And she sat and fondled it in the most— Well, you couldn't forgive her for the way she fondled that absurd dog—unless she happened to look at you, and then you could forgive her anything.

Keith caught himself forgiving her, and turned resolutely back to the magazine. A picture of a group of Red Cross nurses brought back his mental balance.

"That bit of fluff probably doesn't even know there is a war," he thought to himself. "There ought to be a law against women like that. They ought

to be shut up in a convent or something."

And then he looked at Eberle.

That young man was openly gazing. The first glimpse had evidently done the work, and he hadn't taken his eyes off her since.

Keith found himself rather resenting that look. Of course it wasn't his affair, but Eberle's reputation with women was a bit unsavory, and the girl was quite alone, and about as able to take care of herself as the dog was. Four times already had the porter been called to her assistance. He had even had to untie a string that had got around the dog's collar, and he'd grinned while he was doing it. Now Keith knew from long observation that that particular porter had never been agreeable before in all his dusky life.

Then the conductor came along. Of course she had lost her "funny little red ticket," but the conductor only smiled, actually patted the dog's head, and then hunted patiently for the ticket. It took him, the porter, and Keith to find it. And Keith experienced a most unaccountable cheerfulness when he saw it was for Hunter's Lodge.

The Maine Special was due there at seven p. m. It was merely a flag station for the use of the Lodge, a luxurious, clublike hotel, three miles deep in the woods. For years, the same people had been coming there at some time during the season, for Hunter's Lodge belonged to the socially elect, and it took a long, long pull and a strong, strong pull to get in at all, so long was the waiting list. But Keith was quite sure he'd never laid eyes on that girl before. He knew he could never have forgotten her.

About five o'clock, the train stopped, with one of those sickening lurches, right in the midst of a cornfield. For half an hour, nothing seemed to happen, and then people began cornering the conductor. It was understood that the

engine was undergoing mysterious repairs. Just whether a wheel had fallen off or the engineer had merely stopped for tea was not confided to the inquiring public. They were merely informed that a couple of hours would be spent in the cornfield. Accordingly, every one got out of the car and strolled around. And of course every one began getting hungry, chiefly because there was no diner on.

And then Eberle appeared from somewhere in the cornfield, having in tow a farmer's wife who bore the most delectable-looking sandwiches and steaming hot coffee. It was plain sailing, after that. He offered every one of the Heaven-sent food, and, like shipwrecked mariners, every one got very chummy.

With an ingenuity for which Eberle had been famous since the days when he had got for himself the management of the football team, in spite of every one, he now managed to isolate the girl, and was soon floundering deep in the mazes of those blue-gray eyes.

Again Keith decided to wash his hands of the whole affair. And yet, three hours later, when the train decided to move on again, he found himself chatting amiably with Eberle, while they both admired that confounded dog—and the girl smiled on them both from across the aisle.

It was dark when the Maine Special finally reached Hunter's Lodge. Eberle, Keith, and the girl were the only passengers to alight. One of Eberle's cars was waiting—"Of course it would be," muttered Keith—and as it happened, it was the only conveyance to meet the delayed train. Nothing for it but that they should all drive over to the Lodge in it.

Keith sat gloomily in the back seat with the chauffeur and the luggage, while Eberle drove, with the girl sitting there beside him—and making hay while the sun shone. To be strictly

accurate, the moon was shining, which makes even better hay—of this particular variety—than the sun itself.

Occasionally the girl looked back at the gloomy figure on the back seat. She even offered him the dog to hold, but most of her attention was focused on the man beside her. He was a good-looking cuss, Keith was forced to admit, and he had a way with him with women, although the particular way was not at all Keith's way.

That young man was, feeling decidedly out of it—just what he had been longing for a few hours earlier. He was being left alone with a vengeance, and it wasn't so delightful as he had anticipated. If only she hadn't been so darn' pretty!

A huge fire burned in the living room of the Lodge, for the night was chilly, and a driving rain had begun in the early evening. Keith Bronson, exceedingly good looking in his hunting clothes, was gazing into the fire from the depths of a low morris chair. He had just begged off from a game of auction and, to pay him back, the group of girls had settled themselves on a near-by divan and begun to chatter. No earthly use to try to read, so Keith settled back and listened idly. Anything to stop thinking even for ten minutes.

"Who is she, anyway? That's what I'd like to know," a last year's debutante was inquiring. "Oh, what's the use of having brains? They say times are changing, but men certainly are not. Give them a pretty face and a helpless baby gurgle, and the stupid things come running for miles around! It doesn't matter that she hasn't a brain in her head, never gets up till noon, and would swoon if she saw a mouse. Don't talk to me!"

"She's landed Carl Eberle very neatly," snapped a black-eyed young thing, as she knitted vigorously.

"It know other been a to him she do sense it rain Keith chair a straight trying gazed "I h said," "I hate low ha The "We have m ine pic a little after t out on Keith hopes the use lems o to land —a gir second that wa lous gir head. a girl v tions o didn't ought t Keith rapid t Why h ond th hadn't consciou day—w she had aisle on The t roadster mist. ?



"It doesn't seem possible that she can know the reputation he has," said another young knitter. "Why, I've never been allowed to more than just speak to him. I guess she doesn't know, for she does seem nice, although she hasn't sense enough to go in the house when it rains."

Keith pulled himself out of the low chair and walked away from the fire, straightening his broad shoulders as if trying to shake off a load. The girls gazed after him.

"I hope he heard every word we said," announced the black-eyed one. "I hate to see Keith falling for that yellow hair. He's such a wonder."

The debutante laughed.

"Well, his lordship doesn't seem to have much of a chance, at that. Imagine picking Carl Eberle! My, but she's a little fool!" And she gazed wistfully after the tall figure just disappearing out on the veranda.

Keith's vacation, so far, had been a hopeless failure. What on earth was the use of getting one's mind off problems of international importance, only to land it instantly on another problem—a girl who wasn't worthy of even a second thought? Just a fluffy thing—that was all she was—an utterly frivolous girl, without a thought in her curly head. Moreover, she was the kind of a girl who would encourage the attentions of a man like Eberle. If she didn't know his reputation, somebody ought to tell her.

Keith lighted a pipe and began a rapid tramp of the rain-soaked porch. Why had he ever given this girl a second thought? Why was it that he hadn't been able to get her out of his consciousness for one instant since that day—was it only a week ago?—when she had danced into the seat across the aisle on that old Maine Special?

The toot of a horn, and Eberle's gray roadster came into sight through the mist. The girl was with him, and she

waved a little hand to the tall figure on the porch as the car swung up to the steps. So Keith, his heart beating faster in spite of himself, went down to help her out, while Eberle took the machine on to the garage.

The momentary touch of that slim white hand shot through Keith like fire. He wanted to pick her up in his arms and carry her safely up the slippery steps. Of course he did nothing of the kind. He walked quietly beside her up onto the porch, making some eminently fitting remark about the beastly weather.

"Oh, I love it!" she bubbled. "I love to ride and ride, with the raindrops all dancing on my face!" And the gray-blue eyes looked up at him, and the red lips smiled.

She looked like such a baby, standing there. There didn't seem to be any one else to tell her, and she ought to know. It was clearly up to him, disagreeable as it was. He stopped in front of her on the rainy porch.

"Miss Eccles," he said, "you'll pardon what I'm going to say, but it's something you ought to know. I—I'd be a little careful about seeing so much of Carl Eberle. You see, he's a bit of a rotter."

It was the first time in Keith's life that he'd ever warned a woman against any man he knew. It made him feel extremely uncomfortable, to say the least. But somebody had to tell her; it was only fair to the girl.

For a moment the gray-blue eyes looked steadily into his, searchingly, keenly. For some queer reason, they reminded Keith of the way his mother had used to look at him when he had just confessed to some boyish mischief. It was ridiculous, of course, but, in some unaccountable way, she did seem like his mother. Then she laughed—her silvery, tinkly laugh—and the look was gone.

"Are you a safe person, then, to ride

with?" she murmured, and fled into the lobby. The last glimpse Keith had of her was of a pair of slim little gray suede slippers disappearing up the stairs.

Of course she had misunderstood him. He was an ass even to have dreamed that she would understand his motive in speaking as he had. A girl like that couldn't. He was through, definitely through, and he strode fiercely into the lobby, up to his room, and to bed, although it was only nine o'clock.

Not so Peggy Eccles. From her vine-covered window, she saw Eberle come back from the garage. At two in the morning, she was still sitting beside the window, and she saw Eberle going softly out to the garage. Three hours later, she saw him stealing back again. She had never left the window.

The next evening being still rainy, a small group was again gathered around the fire. But there was a vast difference, this time. Peggy Eccles was there, with Carl Eberle lounging at her feet. To save his life, Keith couldn't keep away.

Some one suggested ghost stories. Whereat Peggy gave a gurgle of delight.

"I adore ghosts and haunts and getting frightened to death!" she exclaimed, and all the men unconsciously looked strong and protecting.

"You know there used to be a real haunted house around these parts, about twenty miles off in the woods," Keith volunteered. "Guess it's there yet."

"Oh, tell me about it, please!" she begged, but Eberle interrupted.

"I say, nobody will sleep to-night. Let's have a rubber." And he pulled himself up from the floor.

But Peggy was insistent, and with a very bad grace, Eberle settled himself back on the cushions, a slight scowl on his handsome face. And Peggy, looking like a delighted child who has been granted a wish, saw the scowl.

"You see," began Keith, feeling a bit cheery for the first time in days, "an old chap and his two sons, all a little queer, built the shack miles away from any one. It's in the woods, about half a mile from Devil's Harbor. That's a treacherous place on the coast that all fishermen steer clear of. They couldn't have picked out a lonelier place in all of Maine. Once a month, one of them used to show up at Pickton for provisions. Well, three months passed, and they didn't appear, so the town constable got himself two assistants and started out to see what was up.

"He found them—all three of them—hanging to rafters, and they'd been hanging there a good six weeks. That was ten years ago, and nobody seems to have cared to make a summer residence of the place or anything like that. Occasionally hunters go by, and a lone fisherman or two have heard groans at night. The three old chaps still haunt the place, so they say, and no one would live there on a bet. Remember, Eberle, when a crowd of us tried to stick it out up there one night?"

"Yes," said Eberle shortly. "Crazy kids. Now let's play that rubber."

But Peggy's eyes were radiant with excitement. She was hanging on Keith's every word.

"Tell me what happened. Did you see a ghost?"

Keith laughed.

"It was darned lonesome—I remember that. Three of us stuck it out until two a. m. Then a couple of owls hooted, and the boards creaked, and we decided to beat it back home. We'd had all we wanted of ghost hunting."

The group shivered. A girl reached over and clutched the nearest hand. It happened to be Eberle's. He laughed and ruthlessly exposed her.

But Peggy was unsmiling. She touched Eberle lightly on the shoulder.

"I want you to take me to the haunted house—please!" she pleaded.

I  
not  
live  
tha  
An  
dra  
But  
the  
T  
gar  
nev  
  
I  
ball  
a li  
wee  
tive  
wor  
the  
thei  
offi  
day  
dan  
  
T  
dan  
ciat  
to l  
to-n  
him  
dan  
keep  
was  
was  
  
L  
ning  
dan  
whi  
mon  
visi  
arm  
was  
eyes  
didi  
tere  
thin  
  
A  
over  
dere  
was  
8

Eberle sternly shook his head.

"You'd faint at the sight of a bat—not to mention the rats and snakes that live there. Now we're going to play that bridge I've mentioned before." And boldly seizing Peggy's hand, he dragged her off, and the rest followed. But her mind was evidently still on the haunted house.

That night Eberle's car never left the garage. The fluffy girl knew, for she never left her vine-covered window.

It was the night of the Red Cross ball. They called it a ball, to make it a little different from the regular semi-weekly dances, and the Lodge's attractive ballroom was gayly decked with wonderful, sweet-smelling pines from the forests. All the girls were wearing their best-looking frocks, for several officers on furlough had arrived that day, and this promised to be a "regular" dance.

True to form, Keith generally cut dances. They were too closely associated with that gentler sex that was to have no part in his busy life. But to-night wild horses wouldn't have kept him back. He was going to have one dance with Peggy. His resolution to keep away had vanished utterly. He was in love, madly, hopelessly, and that was all there was to it.

Looking very handsome in his evening clothes, he gloomily watched the dancers, waiting for that third waltz which she had promised him—for the moment when he could take that fairy vision in dainty white tulle close in his arms. What did it matter that there was so little behind those blue-gray eyes? Queer that it didn't. Still, it didn't seem to matter—nothing mattered. And yet he found that something did matter.

An hour later, the precious dance over, Keith left the ballroom and wandered out to the deserted veranda. It was another dark night, dark and chilly,

with low-scudding clouds. Keith leaned up against a pillar and lived over again those brief moments when she had been in his arms. He would never dance with another woman.

Suddenly there was a soft chugging sound, and Eberle's roadster stole out of the garage and stopped a few yards from the drive. Eberle climbed out and stood waiting, unable to see the man in the shadow of the pillar.

And then, running quickly out from a side entrance, came—his golden girl. He couldn't be mistaken. Quite clearly he heard her impish laughter as she stood looking up at Eberle.

"Wait a minute. I'm going to get a heavier cloak," she said, and darted into the house.

Keith, standing in the shadow of the pillar, never moved. Eleven o'clock at night, stealing away from a dance, to ride with Eberle! And she knew now the sort of man he was.

But up in her room, the girl was whispering rapidly into the telephone. The number she had called was Pickton, the nearest town.

With an abrupt, "Make it as fast as you can," she hung up the receiver, seized her cloak, and danced down the stairs and out to the waiting car. Again she laughed as Eberle helped her into the low seat.

Keith never moved. He saw the machine turn and glide quickly out of the drive. He heard her silvery laughter and Eberle's low reply. What was there left for him to do? He had warned her. If she was that sort—well, this was the end of it for him. Another dream shattered—only this was different from all the rest. She was such a little thing.

For an hour he tramped up and down the long veranda. He walked miles, hoping against hope that the gray car would glide back up the driveway. Surely it was just a childish prank. She had just gone for a little spin.

But at twelve o'clock they had not returned.

At one, Keith felt that the world had tumbled about him. The gray car had not come back.

He stumbled up to his room and sat there in the darkness, gazing out of the window into the blackness of the surrounding woods. The dance was over long ago. Hours were early in Hunter's Lodge, and midnight was late here for people who considered it just the beginning of the evening in town.

The house had quieted, and there was no sound. For half an hour, the man at the window watched the shadowy driveway. But no faintest sound of a motor broke the stillness of the night. Keith found himself praying as he knelt there. It had been years since he had prayed. He looked at his watch again—one-thirty.

And then he heard a low knock. With a bound he crossed the room and fairly wrenched open the door. It was the night watchman.

"Beg pardon, Mr. Bronson," he said, "but a lady told me to give you this here note at one-thirty. It's a queer time, sir, but here it is," and he handed Keith a little white envelope.

With trembling fingers, Keith took it, gave the man a dollar, and closed the door. His hand shook so that he could scarcely switch on the light. This is what he read.

Please knock on my door, 558, at one-thirty. If I am not there by then, please come quickly to the haunted house.

PEGGY ECCLES.

The haunted house—alone with Eberle, at one-thirty in the morning! Was she out of her senses? But why the note to him? What did it mean? She must have been afraid of Eberle—afraid, and yet she had gone!

He looked quickly at his watch—twenty-five of two—five minutes lost! Seizing a heavy overcoat, he flung it on over his evening clothes, stopping

only long enough to drop his automatic into the pocket. Action at last.

Out of his room he tiptoed and down the hall, knocking on her door as he passed. As he expected, there was no response, and cursing the wasted seconds of waiting, he got out of the house and into the garage. He found his own Marmon in the semidarkness and pushed it gently out into the driveway. No one must hear that machine go out. Climbing in, he started her down the pitch-black driveway. It was just a quarter of two.

At a little before midnight, a long gray car had been tearing along those same lonely roads, a girl's blue veil fluttering out behind. Eberle slowed down to let her draw it in more closely.

"Was it my threat to ask Mr. Bronson to bring me or was it the wager I promised to pay that's making you take me to the haunted house?" she laughed up at him.

"Don't look at me like that!" he breathed. "Don't! I'd take you to hell itself when you look at me like that!"

But the girl only laughed.

"You're not afraid?" he asked, leaning closer. "You're out here alone with me—and I—I'm mad about you—mad! Do you still want me to go on—to the haunted house?"

Peggy nodded.

"Afraid of you?" she murmured. "Why, you wouldn't let anything hurt me—even a ghost—would you?"

But the man didn't answer. He drove the car on at breakneck speed.

"The Lord looks after—" he began, but he didn't finish the quotation. She wouldn't know what he meant, anyway. Thank Heaven, when He gave them faces like Peggy's, He left out other things. Eberle liked them better that way. Brains were meant for men alone.

On the car plunged. They were deep in the woods, far from human habita-

tion. Occasionally could be heard the boom of the surf, half a mile away. The girl shivered slightly.

"Shall we go on?" the man whispered, his dark head bent close to her light one.

"Go on," she smiled back. "I want to see a ghost."

Eberle smiled grimly. His patience was inexhaustible.

On the car tore over the rough mountain road. Far off could be heard the hoot of an owl. And then Peggy gave a little hysterical laugh.

"Awfully scary, isn't it?" she murmured.

"Still want to go on?" asked Eberle grimly.

"Of course," she answered. "Nothing is going to stop me from seeing that haunted house—even if I have to get Mr. Bronson to take me." She stifled a tiny yawn. "I hope it isn't awfully much farther. This riding is making me dreadfully sleepy," and she stifled another yawn.

"Go to sleep if you want to. I'll wake you up to see the ghosts."

But Peggy glanced at him dubiously as she snuggled deeper into the folds of her coat.

"You might cheat and never wake me up," she murmured.

Then she yawned again, as the car glided quietly through the pine trees.

"You see, I go to sleep awfully easily," she confided, "and I'd never wake up of myself. Promise you'll wake me if I should go to sleep. Swear by yonder headlight," and she laughed up at him like a sleepy child.

"I swear," he answered, and drove the car on through the darkness.

For several moments the only sound was the soft chug-chug of the engine. Gradually the girl's head sank lower into the depths of her cloak. Her eyes closed. Her soft breathing was regular. The car was running very quietly.

Eberle glanced at his watch. Then

he looked at the girl. A certain tension about him seemed to vanish. The girl was fast asleep.

A quarter of a mile up the road was the vague outline of a house. Slower and slower became the movement of the car. From far out at sea came the sound of a foghorn. Eberle started and looked at his watch again. Peggy slept on.

More and more slowly moved the car until Eberle stopped it gently in front of the deserted house without the slightest jar. The girl never even moved. Again came the sound of the foghorn, this time a little nearer.

Scarcely breathing, so quietly did he move; Eberle got out of the car. The girl was fast asleep. On tiptoe, so that not a leaf crackled, he stole over to the deserted house.

It was a two-story frame affair, with an attic overhead. The windows and doors were mostly gone, and the wind shrieked unhampered through the empty rooms. The only inhabitants of the place were bats.

At the door, Eberle stood and looked long at the dark bundle in the car, but it hadn't moved. Again came the sound of the foghorn, and the man turned quickly and disappeared through the empty doorway.

And then, very cautiously, the inside of the dark bundle in the car came to life. Out of her cloak Peggy slipped, still leaving its outline on the seat unchanged. Something bright gleamed in her hand, and her gray eyes were like steel. For a moment she peered anxiously into the surrounding woods and down the dark road. Apparently she was the only live creature in the forest. She looked at her tiny wrist watch. Then she tested the gleaming thing in her hand and turned quickly toward the house.

Lightly she ran to the empty doorway and peered in. Eberle's feet were just

disappearing up a dilapidated flight of stairs.

Cautiously she climbed in, being careful not to step on any loose board. But the moaning wind completely drowned the sound of her light footsteps. Up the stairs she crept. She heard Eberle's footsteps on the floor above, and then they ceased abruptly. On she went, feeling each step before she put her weight on it. She reached the second floor. It, too, was deserted, all open to the moaning night wind. There was no sign of Eberle.

Peggy glanced quickly about her and then looked up. A dim light was shining through a trapdoor in the ceiling. A ladder led up to the opening. Picking her way cautiously across the floor, she paused at the foot of the ladder. Again she tested the gleaming thing in her hand. Then noiselessly, rung by rung, she climbed the ladder.

The footsteps above were moving away from the trap. As she realized this, the girl climbed more quickly. Slowly she lifted her head through the opening. Eberle's back was turned; he was looking through a telescope that opened through the apparently blind wall of the attic.

Gently Peggy swung herself up, thanking a kind Providence for the rush of the wind. The man at the telescope was absorbed. He heard nothing.

She took the room in at a glance. It was lined with huge boxes of provisions, and a large map hung on the wall. There was a couch that seemed to serve as a bed. The girl sank down on it, the trapdoor between her and Eberle. A ship's clock that hung on the wall said one o'clock.

And then Eberle turned. He was looking into a pair of blue-gray eyes, and just below the eyes was an automatic.

"Put up your hands, please," was all she said, and mechanically the man

obeyed her. "You'd better sit down," she added. "It may be a long wait."

A dangerous look came into Eberle's face.

"You little devil!" he hissed. "So that was your game?"

"Yes, that was my game," she answered quietly. Gone was the baby gurgle, gone was the helpless look. "My orders are dead or alive."

"You've got more than you can handle this time!" Eberle said. "What are we going to do—sit here all night?"

He asked the question carelessly, but the girl detected the little note of triumph in his voice. For two weeks, she had studied every cadence of it. But all she said was, "Yes," and then they waited.

Again and again she caught Eberle's furtive glance at the clock. Which would come first—the men she was waiting for or the man who was coming to him? With a grim shiver at the possibilities ahead, Peggy waited. She never took her eyes from the man before her.

"You know I'm unarmed," he said at last. "Let me take my hands down."

She nodded, and he relaxed into a more comfortable position.

The clock ticked off the minutes. Two o'clock came and went. Still they waited. The man's head seemed to nod slightly, but the girl never relaxed her watch. A quarter past two!

Then a faint sound came from the floor below. Some one was stepping cautiously across the creaking boards. Who?

"If you make a sound, I'll shoot!" she whispered, and Eberle relaxed again.

There was no doubt that she meant it. Her orders were dead or alive. They both sat and waited. The footsteps paused at the foot of the ladder; then there was silence. The girl held her breath. The hand holding the re-



volver trembled ever so slightly. Could Keith possibly have got there so soon?

A hand appeared in the opening, and then a dark head. Keith Bronson was pulling himself through the trap. He heard a girl's quiet voice:

"Please cover Mr. Eberle with your revolver for a minute. I want to rest."

But Keith had not waited.

"You hound!" he cried, and leaped at Eberle. The blow he gave him was the old uppercut that had never failed him. Eberle tumbled down, an inert mass. Then Keith turned to the girl.

"You poor little thing!" he began, and then he stopped. Who was this girl—this quiet-faced woman with the keen gray eyes? Where was the helpless, fluffy thing he had held in his arms a few hours ago?

"Who—who are you?" he gasped.

"Just Peggy Eccles, of the secret service," she answered—and then she smiled at him, her own Peggy smile, and if three belated secret-service men from Pickton hadn't arrived, breath-

less, at that particular moment, there is no knowing what might have happened.

All the world knows of the capture of that U-boat. The story leaked out gradually—how, when Carl Eberle came to from that uppercut that Keith had given him, he found himself entirely surrounded by the secret service of the United States; how not only was the unsuspecting U-boat captain taken as he came through the woods to the haunted house, but the U-boat itself—by a destroyer, which got the message from Peggy Eccles.

The world knows all this, but it doesn't know what happened to the shining light of the secret service going home in Keith's car. It never guessed that a very meek and very tired little person surrendered unconditionally. And the conqueror was not a burly German, either—just a good American, whose eyes were shining with a great wonder. For in his arms he was holding—his golden girl.



### FOR POETS SLAIN IN WAR

**H**APPY the poets who fell in magnificent ways!  
Gayly they went in the pride of their blossoming days,  
Each with his vision of Liberty, chanting its praise.

Seeger and Kilmer and Pearse and Brooke and Péguy—  
Names that are songs in the saying, that surely shall be  
Laureled among the immortals, for all men to see.

Lo, they were darlings of destiny! Weakly we shed  
Even one tear that they lie at the barricades red,  
Splendidly dead for the Patria, splendidly dead!

WALTER ADOLPHE ROBERTS.



# The Effervescence of Nicolette

By Josephine A. Meyer  
Author of "The God of Fools," etc.

## V.—The Lieutenant and the Vampire

**T**IMMY, is there an eye test for the navy?" asked Nicolette one afternoon, when her husband came home from work.

"Of course, dear."

"And Winslow had to pass it to get in?"

"Your brother? Certainly."

"If he'd been blinded or had become defective or anything since, he'd have been discharged?"

"Lord, Nick, what's worrying you now?"

"This." She handed him a letter. "Read that—out loud."

Timothy read obediently:

DEAR SIS: This letter presents Lieutenant Philip Curtis, of the Medical Corps. I knew him at college, and he's a good-natured sap. He's doing some special research, and so they've sent him down to the hospital in your burg, where you seem to cultivate prize germs. How would you like to take him in and treat him like a brother? He must be bright, or they wouldn't have sicked him on those bugs, but he masks his headlights beautifully, is respectful, quiet, and kind to children. I don't remember much about his appetite, but it's only for two weeks, and he's in the Service, so Hoover can't get sassy. Will you take a chance on it? You don't need to, but I'd be eternally grateful if you would. Thanks.

WINSLOW.

"Mary brought that letter up to me this afternoon," continued Nicolette. "I went downstairs to meet him after reading it, and what do you suppose I saw?"

"A trained elephant," guessed Timothy, not to be outdone by fact.

"Oh, Timmy!" protested Nicolette impatiently. "I'm in earnest. Suppose he's a spy? What ought a man to look like to fit that description of Winslow's?"

"Winslow's description?" Timothy glanced again at the letter. "Why, Winslow didn't describe him, physically, at all."

"That's just it. No one could help describing this man."

"Why? Some of his features missing?"

"Not one. Timmy," declared Nicolette solemnly, "he looks like Phebus Apollo."

"Well," observed Timothy tranquilly, "I wouldn't get too excited over that, Nick, if I were you. I don't really think it could be he."

But when, half an hour later, Lieutenant Philip Curtis appeared with his luggage, Timothy admitted that Winslow had been remiss in letting him down upon the impressionable Nicolette without warning.

"I bet Apollo's sore he never thought of khaki," was his inward reflection.

Otherwise, Winslow's write-up had been quite fair. The young man ably "masked his headlights." Socially, he was purely ornamental. Still, if a man is only big and beautiful enough, a stammer will do in place of conversation, and if it is accompanied by a nervous flush or other marks of shyness, it gives him the added charm of boyishness, which is more deadly than wit.

Besides, he was a "good-natured sap." He made crushing efforts to talk. His one real conversational contribution proved a species of bomb.

"I have another letter of introduction to a lady here, from a friend—back home," he remarked, in one of those silences that bloomed so luxuriantly throughout their intercourse.

"Who is she? If we know her, we might go with you to see her," beamed Nicolette, feeling it a personal triumph to discover that he could speak a full sentence.

He drew an envelope from his pocket and read the address: "Mrs. Fanny Edgerton."

"Oh," said Nicolette, and her face became forbiddingly blank.

Timothy interceded.

"When your friend gave you that letter—he hesitated delicately—"he probably neglected to mention that—er—the lady in question has her own—social set."

"Her niece gave it to me. I didn't know there were—different—social sets here. It—it doesn't seem democratic," criticized Curtis diffidently.

"What is her niece like?" inquired Nicolette socratically.

"Gladys? Gladys Crane is her name." The young man blushed vividly. "She—she's very sweet."

Nicolette looked baffled, but determined.

"How old are you?" she demanded.

"Me? I'm twenty-seven."

Timothy's shocked eyes apparently did not impress Nicolette in the least.

"And you've been through college?"

"Yes."

"And medical school?"

"Why, yes." Curtis began to look frightened, as if expecting her to ask next for his diplomas, which he did not have with him. But Nicolette had abruptly ceased her inquisition. He felt the necessity of adding, "Why?"

"Oh, just that then you won't be sur-

prised, after you have seen Mrs. Edgerton, if she kisses you good night."

"Nicolette!" protested Timothy, laughing. "Simply because, in an exuberant moment, a woman chooses to sell kisses at a fair—"

"You know how much you think of things you send to be sold at a fair," retorted Nicolette.

"Don't be a prig, Nickie!"

"Don't be a hypocrite, Tim! What did you mean by saying she had her own social set?" challenged Nicolette.

"I didn't intend the statement to reflect on her—er—character," lied Timothy gallantly, under the look in the lieutenant's wide eyes. "After all, a set is a matter of tastes rather than morals, isn't it? Some of the best citizens are in the set that bowls and goes picnicking in groves. And look at the young innocents in the dramatic club!"

"I—I think I know what you mean," spoke up Curtis at last. "She's been divorced."

"So have lots of the best people," broke in Timothy, before Nicolette had a chance to speak.

"I believe in divorce, don't you, Mrs. Meade?" demanded Curtis, with a sudden access of poise.

"Oh—yes," wavered Nicolette, startled. Again she had occasion to wish that Winslow had been less reticent in the matter of essentials.

"Her divorce was for incompatibility," went on the lieutenant, surprisingly fluent. "That's the only good reason for it, because it's the symptom of all the others—cruelty, infidelity, or desertion. They all hark back to that."

"That's true," murmured Nicolette.

"Yet there are suspicion and stigma attached to every case, and you are expected to explain in public just where the incompatibility lies. It's impossible."

"Surely."

"Even if it were more indecent to fall out of love than it is to fall in love,

which I don't grant, should that be a reason for inviting every one, especially the morbid minded, to discuss it? I believe, if we had to go to court with the true reason for every marriage, marriage would become as scandalous as divorce."

"Heavens!" gasped Nicolette.

"Oh—I—I beg your pardon!" Curtis drew himself up in a kind of panic. "I—I meant no offense."

It threw him back into the heavy depths of self-consciousness, tonguetied again for the rest of the evening.

"Two weeks?" asked Timothy, when he and Nicolette were retiring. "We are to have little Chatterbox with us for two whole weeks?"

"Now, Timmy, you'll be away four days of that time, and I'll be glad to have him round in case I need help for the children or anything. You know how I hate a manless house."

"Well, I suppose he'll not be as bad as a watchdog. The Lord probably started to make him a Saint Bernard and changed his mind just a little too late."

"Timmy, do you suppose he's been married?"

"Perhaps that's how he acquired his magnificent gift of silence."

"That's comic-paper stuff, Timmy. I wonder what sort of girl that 'sweet' niece of Mrs. Edgerton's is. I've heard she comes of nice people. Timmy?"

"Well?"

"Ought we to let him present his letter to that terrible woman?"

"We'd have our nerve with us to try to prevent it."

"But just think of her, Timmy, with her hard, enameled face and that weird crowd she travels with! If she ever got her vulgar, long, polished nails on him, she'd never let him go till she'd ruined him."

"The vampire!"

"Don't laugh, Timmy. He's too nice to be ruined."

"Too nice looking, you mean."

"And he has brains. Winslow said so."

"He said he never noticed it."

"That's because he never looked farther into his head than his face," sniffed Nicolette. "And after all," she added, counterattacking with some effect, "I don't blame him."

Timothy was just. Next night he reported to Nicolette that one of the doctors working in the laboratory with Philip Curtis had had no difficulty in discovering the latter's brains.

"He's awfully chatty with bacilli," he added enviously. "He must find us dull because we're healthy."

Curtis had gone, after his silent dinner, to present his letter to Mrs. Edgerton.

"And by the way," encouraged Timothy further, "Apollo isn't and never has been married."

"How do you know?"

"I asked him. Aren't you glad?"

"Glad? Now I can see that he's even more helpless in Fanny Edgerton's hands. She'll probably marry him herself."

"After all he's said on the subject, I think you might trust Fascinating Phœbus to have a good reason for marrying when the time comes."

"But it is serious, Tim. Don't you really think we ought to do something for him?"

"Sure I do."

"What?"

"Exactly what we've done for him these last twenty-seven years, which has kept him in such corking form. Exactly what we are going to do in two weeks, after he bids us a nice, polite little farewell and thanks us for our vittles and roof. In other words, I think we ought to mind our own business."

"I suppose you're right," sighed Nicolette.

But the next morning found her questioning her guest at breakfast.

"Did you enjoy your visit last night?" she asked amiably.

"Yes, thank you." His reply was sincere, but noncommittal.

"You found Mrs. Edgerton—er"—she fished vainly for a word both diplomatic and enlightening—"pleasant?"

"Yes, indeed." His tone added nothing.

"Was there any one else there?"

"Yes. Several friends."

"You—er—you found them—er—pleasant, too?"

"Yes."

Timothy, occupied with war news at the other end of the table, was suddenly troubled with a coughing spell.

"I—I suppose you will—call on Mrs. Edgerton again some time?" hinted Nicolette, when Timothy had recovered.

"Thursday for dinner—with your permission."

Timothy's cough returned with violence. Curtis' professional interest became aroused, and Nicolette gave up.

To save Curtis, Nicolette went through her usual tactics of trying to introduce him to a fascinating eligible. For that purpose they called on their neighbors, the Lawrences, only to find that the pretty daughter of the house was away for two weeks. Again Curtis demonstrated that, as a visitor, he was willing, but wordless.

"I wonder if he's as lively at Edgerton's," speculated Nicolette when they got home.

"Microbes are his specialty," replied Timothy enigmatically.

Friday, Nicolette suppressed her curiosity until she had a chance to speak with Curtis alone.

"Did you enjoy your evening at Mrs. Edgerton's?" she asked then.

"Yes, thank you."

"Is Mrs. Edgerton anything like her niece?"

"No."

"I suppose there were others there—again?"

"No. We were alone."

There was an annoying pause, during which even Nicolette's ingenuity seemed paralyzed.

"You—you find Mrs. Edgerton—interesting?" she inquired at last.

"Yes. I'm going again next Sunday afternoon for bridge and supper—if you don't mind."

"Why should I mind, so long as you have no scruples about playing bridge on Sunday?" Nicolette, who was extremely liberal, had difficulty herself in accounting for her annoyance now.

"I—I beg pardon." He increased her irritation by looking as if he had been scolded.

"It's all right. But next week, when Timothy is away, I hope you'll let me know sufficiently in advance when you are not coming home—so that I needn't be alone." She felt she had to fasten some thoughtlessness on him to account for her attitude.

"Why—surely. And if——"

"Excuse me. I think I hear the nurse calling. I must run up and see my kiddies before they go to sleep."

"And she's not even pretty!" Nicolette told her mirror indignantly, as she rearranged her hair, which had become untidy during her bedtime romp with her children. "But he finds her 'interesting.' Timmy is right. Microbes are his specialty."

That gave her an idea.

"Tell me," she accosted Curtis after dinner that evening. "I'm tremendously interested in—bacilli. What books shall I read?"

"What sort of bacilli?" asked Curtis, while Timothy pricked up his ears.

"Oh—assorted," replied Nicolette.

Curtis looked hurt.

"I'm afraid I can't help you," he said gravely.

"Nicolette probably means a sort of beginner's course in hygiene that embraces contagious diseases," Timothy helped out manfully.

"You dear!" breathed Nicolette gratefully. "Yes," she supplemented blithely, to Curtis. "Because of Harold and Susan, you know. A mother ought to be versed in such things."

He gave her a considerable bibliography, and accompanied and followed it up with original comment, criticism, and suggestion, together with citations from his own experience. There was no question as to whether he was enjoying himself that evening.

Nicolette, when she did sleep, dreamed of poliomyelitis.

"Is Saturday a half holiday at the laboratory?" Nicolette asked Timothy next afternoon.

"Yes. Why?"

"Lieutenant Curtis isn't back yet."

"Nick," sighed Timothy patiently, "if our Harold grows up with any indications of becoming more than moderately good looking, for his mother's peace of mind, I shall take him, when he is sixteen, and have him gently, but effectively, tattooed on both cheeks."

Curtis showed up at last near dinner time. He looked tired, but happy, and said he had put in his half holiday doing advance work. Nicolette pursed up her lips. He had brought with him some books from the medical library for his hostess. "Contagious Bronchial, Pulmonary, and Laryngial Diseases of Children" was the most promising title among them.

"The books are a bit technical," apologized Curtis. "The pamphlets are easier reading. This one—'Phagocytes and Leucocytes'—would probably be the most entertaining for a layman."

"How dear of you!" smiled Nicolette, over the edge of her armful of books.

For a moment his long blue eyes, with their dark little wrinkles of fatigue, seemed to lose their absorption in the literature he was extolling.

"He looked at me!" Nicolette triumphantly informed Timothy, when Curtis

had gone upstairs to dress. "I'll make him look at me again if I have to read all these vile and horrible volumes through!"

"Why don't you use a hard, enameled face and vulgar, polished nails?" demanded Timothy serenely. "They're quicker."

Monday, Curtis telephoned that he would remain downtown for dinner, and would work at the laboratory until late at night.

"What do you suppose that really means?" Nicolette demanded suspiciously of Timothy.

"He's trying to avoid looking at you," suggested Timothy.

"If I thought he was visiting that horrible woman again and lying about it, I'd—I'd wash my hands of him."

"Go ahead and wash, then, dear, for you certainly do think so."

Tuesday night Curtis sent the same message, but Nicolette's hands took a deal of washing.

"I suppose you won't be home again to-night," she suggested at breakfast Wednesday morning, with the coldness of the deeply offended.

"I thought Mr. Meade left to-day," replied Curtis.

"He does. What difference would that make?"

"You—you don't like to be alone."

"Don't let my preferences interfere with your work. That must come first under any circumstances." She flashed him a bright, but icy smile.

He looked at her searchingly.

"I would like to bring my work home with me." He hesitated. "Would you object?"

"On the contrary. It would save me a great deal. Only I must insist that your germs be properly muzzled."

"It's mostly clerical work now—reports and statistics," replied Curtis seriously.

Nicolette maintained her ungraciousness all through the dull and silent



Timothy-less dinner that evening. But later, when she sat knitting on one side of the table, where she could glance across at Curtis, hunched somewhat desperately over his neat, but voluminous notes, she began to thaw. His burnished hair looked boyishly thick and rampant in the glow of the lamp, but there were brownish shadows under his eyes and fine lines in his forehead. His indoor work, too, had bleached out some of the handsome bronze of his complexion. Phoebus Apollo, dimmed, was almost wistful. Motherly sympathy fought with the thought that these were the marks of dissipation as well as of fatigue.

She was staring at him more intently than she realized. He looked up. It was unreasonable of her to expect him to take her scrutiny offhandedly, but it irritated her when he flushed.

"I was looking to see—I was wondering if you smoke a pipe," she explained at last lamely.

"Yes, I do." His hand went instinctively to his breast pocket.

"Well, would you mind doing so now?" Nicolette had regained her tranquillity. "I miss Timothy."

"Thank you. I'd love to."

He lit it without further speech, while Nicolette tried to think of something else to say.

"That's good," she nodded, when the first fragrant clouds of smoke appeared.

"I suppose I'm silly to miss my husband so much."

It was a remark as orthodox as it was banal, but he seemed unable to meet it. He appeared somewhat uncomfortably aware that she expected a reply, and refrained from returning to his work, occupying himself and covering his inadequacy by examining his perfectly drawing pipe with all the reproach he could muster in the face of its innocence.

Nicolette took pity on him—and on herself.

"Do go on with your figuring," she begged. "If you let me interrupt you, I shall feel it my duty to leave the room."

He bent over his papers with alacrity.

Nicolette knitted steadily.

Half an hour passed.

A new feeling for Fanny Edgerton dawned in Nicolette's breast—a sweeping admiration for the woman's patience. And what had she done without a Timothy to uphold Curtis' end of the conversation? Or maybe she got him talking about divorce. Was that an unending topic? Maybe she smuggled alcohol to him. He didn't look like a drinker.

Again her gaze, unconsciously intent, drew his eyes from his work.

"I was thinking how well you concentrate," said Nicolette hastily, as if he had questioned her.

He did not attempt to answer, but sat watching her in an odd, half-detached manner that made her uneasy.

"I was wondering," she added, "what sort of person you find more diverting than a disease."

He blinked as if his eyes smarted.

"I am rude!" he exclaimed, distressed. "And you've been so kind!"

"Not 'kind.' That's so institutional. One aspires to be interesting," reproached Nicolette.

"I'm wondering—oh, I'm sure it would be all right to tell you—for I'm going so soon now. And you'll forget—or else it needn't matter," he burst out suddenly, with incoherent, but disconcerting loquacity.

"What—what do you mean?"

"I'm rushing my work to get away as soon as possible. Can't you guess why?"

Nicolette's jaw dropped, and her face burned. But he did not wait for her answer. He swung away from her, his hands crushed against his forehead, his voice full of unexpected inflections.

"No wonder I'm rude—and stupid. I can't—think of anything else—and when I can't talk of it—I'm dumb."

"Maybe—maybe—you oughtn't," protested Nicolette, weakly, greatly frightened.

"It can't hurt—and it would be such a relief to me——"

"Mrs. Meade," interrupted a respectful voice from the door, "kin ye come up to Susan? I think she's sick."

Nicolette left the room filled with and thrilled by the dramatic intrusion of fate, but when she beheld Susan and her symptoms, her mind became crowded with other matters. Harold had, unknown to any one, persuaded Susan to eat an immature apple that afternoon, and Nicolette's brain still harbored some ill-digested bits from Curtis' homily on children's ailments.

"Tell Lieutenant Curtis to come up instantly," she ordered the nurse.

If a man in khaki is compelled by circumstances to take care of a small, frail child, no woman not safely related to him should be permitted to look on. If the man is handsome and the woman is the child's mother, the occasion is rife with complications.

After making Susan comfortable, Curtis persuaded the sleepy Harold to confess to his share in the excitement, and so confirmed the more reassuring diagnosis. He placed Harold back in his crib, handling him with the easy grace of a woman, then turned to Nicolette, who, the tension slackened, stood trembling on the verge of hysteria in the semidark room.

"Here, here!" he exclaimed cheerfully, bracing her with his arm about her. "You mustn't give way. Have you any spirits of ammonia?"

"In my bathroom," shivered Nicolette.

"I'll get it, ma'am." The willing nurse rushed out.

Nicolette swayed. Emotionalism too vague and too involved to be analyzed

led her to droop on the lieutenant's chest, her face upturned. She felt the impersonality melt instantly out of his support. The next moment he had kissed her.

Nicolette drew away with swift horror, filled with shame that was the less bearable because it lacked all the decent elements of tragedy. She knew that she had invited that kiss. She knew—and loathed the thought—that the kiss had been a disappointment to her.

The nurse returned with the ammonia and some water, and Curtis ministered to her so solicitously, unaware of her revulsion against him, that she could hardly drink it in his presence.

"Don't come downstairs again," he advised her with hateful tenderness. "Go to bed and sleep. Sleep in here if that will ease your mind, though I assure you there's no danger at all. And be sure to call me any time if you feel at all nervous. I shall count it a privilege to help."

But it wasn't anxiety over the children that gave Nicolette insomnia that night. She kept going over the events of the evening, acting and reenacting one scene of it with writhing shame.

She was not angry with him for being in love with her. On the contrary, she tried to gather consolation from that fact, strengthening any doubt she might have of the genuineness of his love by the memory of his interrupted confession, the manifest eagerness of his kiss—yes, even his silences, which she could interpret as repression, and his heavy bashfulness, which might well be passion—curbed. Under ordinary circumstances, there were points of rather pretty romance in the whole affair. The young man could not suffer deeply from so innocent a devotion—so discreet a devotee.

Nor was her humiliation due to the fact that she herself had momentarily lost her head over the handsome, gentle boy. It was the shadow of the reviled

Fanny Edgerton that threw the business into a bold relief, exaggerating its grotesqueness, rendering it obviously ludicrous.

So Nicolette had endeavored to save a beautiful soldier from a vampire! How?

Well, she hadn't enameled her face—but—

What would Timothy say?

Her own scathing words burned into her: "You won't be surprised if she kisses you good night!"

"You don't look well," commented Curtis, next morning. "Didn't you sleep, after all?"

"It's your fault," replied Nicolette crossly, because he seemed so placid and she was unable to meet his eye. She grew crimson at her own accusation, adding angrily, "You should never have told me all that stuff about infant paralysis."

"I thought of that afterward. I'm sorry. I was hoping you had forgotten it," he answered contritely.

"I don't forget easily." This time she walked straight into the wasps' nest. She saw it in the quick flush on his face.

"I—I—hoped—too—— I mean—— Please don't think I was taking advantage——"

"No, no, please don't," interrupted Nicolette in horror.

"I've forgotten how much I told you of the truth—and it—it was hard to believe you could completely—understand," he labored on.

"I do—I do!" lied Nicolette.

"Women are wonderful!" proclaimed the lieutenant, now uplifted and glowing. "Fanny guessed it right away, too."

"Fanny!"

"It's so hard these days to be reasonable. Why do people demand it? I can't wait. I want my happiness now, before I am sent away. Fanny thinks an elopement would be excusable."

Once Nicolette had been nearly drowned in the surf. She recalled the sensation now.

"You—you mean——" She choked.

"Oh, I wouldn't really think of that. Our wedding would seem precipitate enough. But our engagement has been so deadly secret no one will believe in it——"

"You are going to elope with Fanny Edgerton?"

"Fanny? No—of course not! Her niece, Gladys Crane. But I'm not going to elope with her. That is, not if they'll only be sensible. Fanny's been writing to her and to them—her parents—urging them, for me, to let us marry at once. They have nothing against me but the war. They think Gladys should wait. But Gladys knows how I feel about divorce, and if I *should* come back—— Well—— They have no grounds. You understand. Yesterday's letter gave me some hope that they were coming round. That—that must have unbalanced me a bit, last night."

"Yes, yes, of course. Come in to breakfast."

"You would congratulate me if you knew Gladys," said Curtis.

"I do—I surely do!"

He seized both her hands.

"Oh, I'm so happy I told you! Now we can talk about it together. Fanny was the only one who knew before." He crushed her hands enthusiastically against his breast. "And—and I'm sure Gladys won't mind," he added softly.

"Nor Timothy," said Nicolette vaguely.

"I mean about my breaking our secret. It won't be a secret long now."

"Oh!" Nicolette, her hands still imprisoned, lowered her head.

"Oh, my dear," he exclaimed, in his deep, kindly voice, "please—please don't think of *that* any more! It was so fine of you to let me—kiss you. And Fanny let me—too."



# The Blind Mole

By Ernest Pascal



PETER LANYARD was a connoisseur of several things. For example, Peter knew more than a little of Japanese prints. Again, Peter was an excellent judge of a picture—particularly those of the modern French school. Peter liked the modern French school—exquisite little studies of the nude, but not of the altogether nude; rather, studies of the feminine form divine which the modern French school handles in so different a manner from the earlier masters. That hint of some filmy garment—that really is a garment and not an indescribable and indefinable wisp of some material with which at the most the older masters would drape their figures—Yes, Peter Lanyard rather specialized in pictures of modern French art.

Finally—and in this Peter was even more sensitively a connoisseur than in any of his other hobbies—Peter was a connoisseur of woman when she was beautiful. Indeed, Peter was blasé on the subject of beautiful women, hypercritical, finding fault where another man would kneel to worship. When some newly arrived and radiant beauty of the footlights would be setting New York clubland agog with excitement, it would fall to Peter Lanyard's part cynically to shrug his shoulders, smother a yawn, and remark that the beauty's eyebrows were too arched, or that they were not arched enough, or

that he did not like the shape of her elbow. Oh, yes, Peter Lanyard was a connoisseur when it came to beauty in woman.

Luckily for Peter, he had been able to drift through life so pleasantly that he had both time and money to pursue all his hobbies. For Peter was wealthy—more than comfortably wealthy—and Peter was thirty-three. More, Peter was rather good looking, with a pleasant personality that cloaked more or less his innate selfishness. Just over medium height, Peter was of the dapper build—rather a wasplike man, with fair hair carefully sleeked back and a little, well-cropped blond mustache. Mild blue eyes were Peter's—eyes that generally smiled placidly, and only occasionally would change with a more definite expression.

Peter lived in very comfortable bachelor quarters on the best side of Gramercy Park—an apartment that was perhaps overcrowded with Peter's collection of Japanese prints and with pictures of the modern French school. Attended by the faithful Deeling—Deeling aided and abetted by a Japanese cook—Peter led an essentially luxurious and possibly sensuous life. For years, ever since an adoring mother had left Peter so very well off as regards money, Peter had drifted along in this bachelor existence, and matrimony had hardly been seriously con-

templated. Then, soon after Peter had passed his thirty-third birthday, Peter fell in love. Not for the first time, of course, but this love affair was different.

To begin with, no one could look at Eileen Quinby and imagine anything but—matrimony! Peter had realized that from the first, and although Eileen, who lived with a widowed mother, was quite transparently, although "gently," poor, Eileen was not the kind of girl to be approached by any one other than a suitor who carried an engagement ring in his pocket.

And Eileen Quinby was so superlatively lovely, in all the radiance of her twenty-three years, that most men would gladly have suffered the shackles of matrimony to be placed upon them without one sigh for the bachelor freedom they were relinquishing. That was hardly the case with Peter Lanyard. Peter shied a little at the idea of marriage. Still, Eileen was very lovely, and Peter was a connoisseur of beauty. He realized, did Peter, that a connoisseur at times has to pay a stiff price. Many a time Peter had paid a stiff price for some exquisite specimen of Japanese art, for a picture of the modern French school, so he gradually brought himself to contemplate the idea of the price of marriage that the possession of Eileen would entail.

And he did it gracefully, too, for Peter was in love with Eileen—that is to say, Peter valued her beauty so highly that doubtless he believed he was in love.

It was a foregone conclusion that Eileen would accept him—and accept him she promptly did. For it is an expensive thing to be a radiant, a pulsing beauty. Beauty demands so much in the way of setting, and it would have been an artistic crime on Eileen's part to deny herself such setting. With beauty as intense and vivid as Eileen's, so much was demanded. For Eileen to

be dressed in a twenty-five-dollar suit of serge was a crime. Eileen's beauty demanded velvet and ermine and sables. None of those necessities to beauty can be purchased for two hundred dollars a month, which was precisely the income on which Eileen and her mother were forced to live. Eileen had been accustomed to riches, and it had been an unpleasant surprise, on the death of her father, who had been a small manufacturer in the Middle West, to find that the factory was heavily mortgaged and that his widow and daughter were left with a mere pittance. Eileen had been expensively educated and polished and finished in Europe, so poverty was doubly hard for her to endure.

She and her mother had come to New York, and it was soon after their arrival in Gotham that Eileen had met Peter. The end had been inevitable. Peter could not live without adding to his collection of beauty, and Eileen was not prepared to live without an income like Peter's.

Peter Lanyard and Eileen Quinby became engaged to be married.

It was on a bright March morning, soon after he had asked Eileen to be his wife, that Peter strolled languidly into the New York Art Galleries, on East Forty-eighth Street. There was, Peter knew, an auction sale that morning of the modern collection of paintings of the late Mortimer Hunt. And Peter had received a catalogue—a compliment that was always paid him by all the leading firms in New York.

Various pictures that were to be offered in the sale were hung in the several rooms, while the auction itself had already begun in the large gallery.

Catalogue in hand, Peter made his way through the various rooms, stopping here and there to make a penciled note as to the amount he was prepared to bid.

Now there was down in the catalogue

the name of that celebrated master of the brush, Jean Marbeau, and Peter worshiped the works of the eminent French painter. He hurried, therefore, did Peter, until he entered the room where the only two specimens of Marbeau were on exhibition. Suddenly he came opposite the first of Marbeau's pictures. He did not look at the second.

On the contrary, Peter did not look at any other picture except that first one of Marbeau's, which was entitled "L'Indiscrete."

The painting revealed an exquisite young girl, clad in the shimmering silks of *ultradéshabillé*—*déshabillé* that was almost not *habillé* at all. And yet such silks as were there gave to the girl an atmosphere of reality. Such an atmosphere is altogether missing in a picture that is frankly of the nude. Then it is only a picture, a study of art, but this was altogether different. The picture pulsed with vibrant life; the girl in it was almost alive. And the artist had not failed in realism. To such an extent had he carried it that he had painted in below the white velvet of the left shoulder a tiny mole.

And the girl was so beautiful, so exquisitely, wondrously beautiful! Her face was piquant, and the expression on her soft red mouth was more than a little subtle. The blue of her eyes was dark violet, and her gold-red hair rioted in a mass of color over one shoulder.

All this interested Peter, but what interested him far more was the fact that the canvas might have been a marvelous portrait of Eileen Quinby!

Almost gasping with surprise, Peter sat down on one of those red-covered benches that are to be found only in such places. From there he studied the picture at his ease. Even the hands were the hands of Eileen; the glorious mouth that hinted at the passion of her nature, the line from ear to chin—all, all were Eileen's.

But impossible! Naturally it could not be Eileen! Eileen was inclined to be a prude, and once, when Peter's ardor had perhaps overstepped somewhat the line of the absolutely conventional lover, Eileen had sharply pulled him up, and Peter had learned that Eileen's modesty was not lightly to be disregarded.

No, it could not be Eileen—and yet—and yet— Slowly Peter got up and strolled toward the auctioneer.

Presently the picture that had caused Peter so great a surprise was put up for sale. Somebody briskly offered five hundred dollars.

"A thousand," said Peter, nodding to the auctioneer, who knew him.

"Twelve-fifty," said the other man.

"Fifteen hundred," Peter came back.

The battle was a brief one, and Peter, declining to have the picture sent home, had it placed in a taxicab and shortly afterward, assisted by Deeling, hung it on the wall of his library.

Then he picked up the telephone and called Eileen.

"I particularly want you to come to tea with me this afternoon," he said quietly. "I can get my Aunt Elinor to be here, if you really want her, but I have a special reason to ask you to come alone—if you would defy convention just for once, to please me. I have something to show you."

Quite graciously, although with a proper appreciation of the favor that she was conferring on him, Eileen consented to defy convention.

When, at four o'clock, Eileen arrived, Peter gave her tea in the living room.

"What is it you want to show me, Peter?" Eileen asked as she poured out the tea.

"It's in the library—a picture. I'll show it to you afterward," Peter replied evenly.

Eileen arched her eyebrows, a trick she had when puzzled. Why had Peter



made so much mystery over all this? Not that it mattered. And Eileen went on to speak of her trousseau.

"There's an evening dress that I'm going to wear next Thursday—although it seems a shame to rob my trousseau. It's black, and absolutely daring, Peter. I'm not sure that it's not the least bit too daring—it's cut so frightfully low at the back."

A peculiar expression glinted in Peter's blue eyes.

"You're going to wear it at the Van Erles' dance?"

Eileen nodded.

"It was very nice of you to get Mrs. Van Erle to ask me. I'm looking forward to it so."

"So am I," Peter smiled back. "Particularly now that I have heard of the new black dress."

Eileen blushed deliciously, and Peter noted it. Were all women hypocrites? Was he doing Eileen a mental injustice?

They chatted of other matters, and suddenly Peter felt that he would hate to give up Eileen. Still, if Eileen had posed for that picture, he would force himself to break the engagement.

"Do you think that a man should ever forgive a woman?" Peter asked quite naturally, as the question had sprung from a discussion of a play that they had seen together a few nights before.

"That all depends on the man, the woman, and what the man is asked to forgive," Eileen summed it up. "Would you forgive me—say, an indiscretion?"

"I don't think I would!" Peter returned warmly. "The fact that I love you so much would make it impossible."

"That you love me so much—or that you love my beauty?"

Eileen was always perfectly frank on the subject of her beauty. After all, her mirror shouted the glad tidings of her exquisite loveliness every time she looked in it, and Eileen often looked

in the mirror. At the same time, Eileen had no intention of offending Peter, for although very beautiful girls can often marry rich husbands, Peter was very rich indeed, and he altogether suited Eileen. No, Eileen would not lightly break her engagement with Peter Lanyard.

"Come," said Peter, when they had finished tea, and he led the girl into the library.

Immediately Eileen saw the picture and she gave a little cry of surprise.

"Yes," said Peter grimly, "I thought you'd be surprised. I bought it this morning at an auction sale. It's by Jean Marbeau. Naturally you see the likeness?"

But Eileen had stepped up closer to the picture and was scrutinizing it gravely. Then, with a little laugh, she turned to Peter.

"I'm sure I could never look such a naughty little girl as that!"

"It's an extraordinary coincidence, to say the least. Please don't think, Eileen, that I imagined for a moment you ever posed for such a picture. Still, I wonder how this man came to picture your face! You never by any chance met him while you were in Europe?"

"Never that I know," Eileen returned evenly. Then her attention wandered, and her eye saw the tiny mole below the milk-white shoulder.

"He was a realist—evidently!"

"Quite," Peter answered. Then he forced himself to laugh—to take on a spirit of banter, for it is often possible to say something by means of a joke that would be impossible in any other form. Somewhat ponderously, Peter wagged a playful finger at Eileen.

"Prisoner at the bar," he began, "proof that you are entirely guiltless in this matter will be forthcoming at the Van Erles' dance. That dress you described will reveal the fact of whether a tiny mole is there or not—

and if you fail to wear that dress—then suspicion will become certainty." Peter laughed forcedly.

But Eileen's return laughter was airy and light—the very expression of innocent mirth.

"I assure the court," she smiled, "that I will wear the dress and prove my innocence at the Van Erles' dance! Of course, if I had a cold or a headache and couldn't come, then I would have to rely on the generosity of the court!"

Peter did not quite like that suggestion—the possibility that the excuse of a cold or a headache might prevent Eileen from attending the dance in that particular dress. Still, Eileen's manner was so assured that doubtless he was building trouble for himself. Of course Eileen could not have sat for that picture—or she could not take so cool a stand over the affair.

In fact, before Eileen allowed Peter to drive her home in his motor brougham, all suspicion—or nearly all suspicion—had left Peter.

"So at least I shall see you on Thursday at the Van Erles'," he said, as the car drew up outside Eileen's apartment.

"I'll call for you if I may. And mind you wear that dress!"

Eileen laughed her reply, and as Peter drove back to Gramercy Park, he, too, laughed—laughed at himself and at the foolish suspicion that the picture had caused.

Still, had Peter been able to follow his fiancée on the following morning, or had he ever found out how she had occupied herself before lunch, he would hardly have laughed so easily. For Eileen was up early, and at ten o'clock, she entered the celebrated beauty parlors of Madame Demnikhof—famous on two continents as a beauty doctor.

Nor was Eileen content until she interviewed madame, herself.

"Tell me, madame," Eileen began nervously, "it is true, isn't it, that you can—that you can——"

"Yes? That I can——" encouraged madame, but then madame was accustomed to a certain amount of embarrassment on the part of her clients.

"That you can remove a small mole?"

"Why, certainly! That is quite easy, mademoiselle. Where is the mole?"

Eileen's hand rested for an instant below her left shoulder.



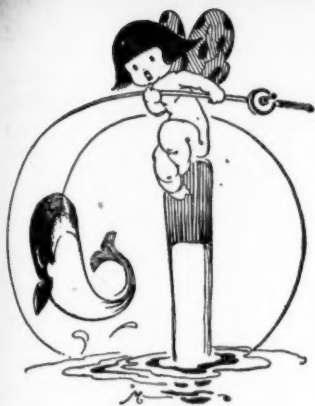
## SO LOVE HAS TAUGHT ME

WHEN, after the last kiss, I turned from you,

I felt as one that a long time has bled—  
Who swooned when shot—and dizzily comes to,  
And moans a little bit, and then is dead.  
But in the sleep that followed, this seemed true—  
I was the blood wherewith your heart is fed,  
Thought in your mind, and lovely warmth all through  
Your lovely length, at last full comforted.

So love has taught me valor. Unafraid  
I go the way of war, with the same will  
That led me to your lips; for I have been  
Earth's lover always, virginal, dismayed,  
Knowing that only death could grant my will  
Of all earth's beauty felt and dreamed and seen.

SALOMON DE LA SELVA.



# The Neglected Garden

By Henry C. Rowland

Author of "The Closing Net," "Auld Jeremiah," etc.



## CHAPTER XIV.

**T**WO days later, Donny took his departure. He left by the early-morning train, and Wynne and Applebo took him over in the electric launch. Their au revoirs were cheerful enough, though Wynne's eyes were moist and her voice tremulous. Donny was his usual cool, collected self.

On their way back across the lake, Applebo looked quizzically at Wynne.

"Donny's one of the bravest men I know," he observed. "He's not afraid to run away. Too bad you couldn't have met him before you did that mud turtle of a Lorrie! You might have been the chatelaine of Miraflores, instead of the neglected wife of a disgruntled engineer. Think how much nicer it would have been to wear a coronet than a pink sunbonnet with a divorce bee buzzing around inside it!" He blinked at her sympathetically.

Wynne's face flamed.

"Shut your mouth, you big yellow tomcat! How do you dare say such things?"

"Donny is not the only hero in the world," Applebo replied.

"What makes you think I've got a divorce bee in my bonnet?" Wynne demanded.

"Putting one and one together. I was fishing around in the waste-paper basket the other day, trying to piece out one of my poems which Hermione had ruthlessly destroyed; and while so engaged, I came on an envelope in your handwriting, addressed to a shyster law firm in New York which makes a specialty of severing nuptial ties. If you'd consulted me, I could have referred you to a better solvent of the conjugal glue. I have sometimes thought of it myself. Let's both get one—yours for desertion and mine for intolerable cruelty. Then—who knows?" He looked at Wynne and let out a sigh that suggested a blowing porpoise.

His mock-amorous look was so comical that Wynne laughed despite her irritation.

"I'd about as soon think of marrying a performing lion," said she.

"You might do worse. It's better to be eaten than to eat your heart out. You couldn't marry Donny, because he's a devout Catholic. Our Lady of Miraflores would put a crimp in you, if the padre didn't feed you powdered glass or put a scorpion in your bed for Donny's soul's good."

"Will you be still?" cried the outraged Wynne furiously.

"I should like to oblige you," said Applebo, "but the divine gift of silence is unfortunately the only one which my bountiful nature does not possess. Poor old Donny! My heart bled for him. Now Lorrie is coming in a couple of days, and I suppose I shall have a regular cardiac hemorrhage. I shall have to lay in a fresh supply of macaroons."

"Idiot!" snapped Wynne.

"No—hardly that," said Applebo judiciously. "Lorrie should scarcely be called an idiot, as he is a middling good hydraulic engineer. He's conscientious, and his work is slow, but not sure."

Wynne stared at him, aghast.

"Are you *quite* balmy?" she asked. "What do you mean by saying that Lorrie's work is not sure?"

"For once in several moons, I mean what I say," replied Applebo calmly. "Like all grinds, Lorrie depends too much upon theory and calculations to be quite sure. He lacks imagination—divine fire, as it were. The result has been unfortunate, as Lorrie has practically been kicked out. Such, at least, was his brutal way of putting it in his last letter to me."

If Applebo was trying in his feline way to take Wynne's mind from Donny and arouse her interest in her errant spouse—which of course he was—these simply uttered words had quite the desired effect. Wynne straightened up and stared at him ferociously.

"If that's intended for one of your silly jokes, Harold," said she, "let me tell you it's in rotten bad taste—just as your other cheeky observations have been!"

Applebo looked pained.

"Now that's what I get for trying to break it to you gently and save poor Lorrie the humiliation!" he complained. "Unfortunately, my dear, it's very far from being a joke. The high and mighty fatheads of the I. C. C. are dissatisfied with Lorrie because a part of his mud pudding hasn't stood the

proof of the eating. Lorrie wasn't quite sure about it himself, and that's what made him so nervous and irritable. This unfortunate circumstance, backed by Lorrie's sass, has got him fired. Uncle Sam loves to spend his money, but he howls like a dervish when he thinks he hasn't got its worth. I can't put it more delicately than that."

Wynne was unable to believe her ears. Lorrie might be a negligent husband, self-centered and indisposed to exert himself for the amusement of others, but Wynne could not think of him as any but a master of his craft. Lorrie's work was the very best of Lorrie. If Applebo had told her that he had eloped with the wife of his chief, the shock would have been no greater.

"Harold," she exclaimed, "are you telling me the truth?"

"I'm coming nearer to it than I usually find necessary," he answered, "but, as sometimes occurs, I may have exaggerated a bit. Possibly Lorrie may not have waited to get chucked out. He may have beaten them to it."

"Resigned his position?"

"Quite so. They stuck a fool over him to tell him what he had warned them about six months ago, and Lorrie got up and pawed the air. He's carried his wrongs to Washington. I haven't heard the result."

"Does Donny know about it?"

"Not to my knowledge," Applebo answered. "Lorrie didn't want him to know. That's the reason I haven't told you before. Donny has always regarded him as such a paragon of technical perfection, whereas you and I know that he's nothing so wonderful."

Wynne flushed angrily.

"Whatever Lorrie may or may not be, he certainly knows his work," said she. "And I must say I don't think it's very nice of you, as a friend of his, to speak that way about him, Harold."

"But I said the same thing to Lorrie,

land he didn't mind," Applebo protested. "In fact, he was inclined to agree with me. Of course, though, he was feeling pretty well discouraged at the time." He blinked at her sorrowfully.

Wynne felt a sudden stab at her heart. Lorrie dominant, hard driving—for he had the reputation of getting more work out of himself and those under him than almost any man on the Zone—callous to everything outside of his work, respected and successful—such a Lorrie was one person, but Lorrie browbeaten, criticized, belittled, and impeached with technical error was quite another. The wife militant in Wynne was suddenly aroused, just as Applebo intended that it should be. That amber-eyed Machiavelli knew perfectly well that to hear of Lorrie's troubles would arouse a sympathy and a tenderness in her which his success could never possibly excite.

They reached the landing, and Applebo made fast the launch.

"Come on, Wynne," said he. "I smell fried trout and bacon. Let's go up to the house and strengthen our systems. After breakfast, if you like, I'll take you out in the St. Lawrence skiff which I presented to my father-in-law for my use while here in camp."

A few days later, Wynne received a letter from Lorrie. "I've chucked my job," he wrote, "and now the I. C. C. appears to be rather sick about having nobody at this moment to take it over. They can go to blazes. I've given them five good years of my life, and just how much it has cost me I can't tell at this moment." Wynne wondered what he meant by that. "I don't feel any regret about getting out. Rather glad of a good excuse, in fact. My part of the work is practically finished, except for certain parts of it that need going over. Besides, the Zone was no place for you. I've already got something better in sight than sweating in that drain, but I'll tell you about that

when I see you. Saw Jim in New York, and he cheered me up by telling me that I'd been a rotten poor husband and neglected you shamefully. But I guess you understand, don't you? Unless you get a wire to the contrary, you may expect me next Monday by the noon train. I'm pretty tired, what with the work and worry and everybody taking a crack at me. We shall probably not remain long at the camp, as I have other plans for the summer, and, besides, it seems like abusing hospitality. I want you all to myself for a while."

Wynne scarcely knew how to take this letter. There ran through it a sort of don't-give-a-hang jauntiness which was unlike the plodding Lorrie. She finally decided that it was merely a pose to disguise his hurt pride and general discouragement. She felt very sorry for him and determined to do all that she could to cheer and comfort him, no matter at what cost to her own feelings. It was very possible, she thought, that he might also be rather worried about his financial affairs, for although he had once told her that he had a little income from certain mills in Massachusetts, enough to enable him to live modestly aside from his salary, she thought it possible that his work on the canal had obliged him to neglect these interests and that it might be this to which he had referred in saying that he was as yet unable to tell what the canal might have cost him.

So it was in a very softened mood that she awaited his coming. She pictured him thin and haggard, probably more or less jaundiced—for he had mentioned a slight attack of fever—rather shabby, perhaps, for he had lived so long in khaki and puttees that he had grown indifferent to and almost ignorant of the costumes of conventional society. Wynne thought happily of her own little income and the pleasure it would give her to put it at Lorrie's disposal.

If Wynne could have seen Lorrie at that moment, her emotions would have been quite different. As if in compensation for the trials through which he had passed, there had come almost an avalanche of good fortune. From Washington he had gone directly to Massachusetts to visit his mill properties, which he had found under a new and vigorous management that was rapidly increasing the profits. He had of course heard something of this, but did not realize its full significance until after his visit to the plant and an interview with the young and able superintendent.

On top of this pleasant discovery came a most gratifying letter from a Western funding and development company, offering him the position of chief engineer at a salary more than double that which he had received from the I. C. C.; this through the strong recommendation of his former chief, who was president of the company. Lorrie suddenly awoke to the fact that he was very well off, and that his and Wynne's joint incomes should amount to something like twenty thousand dollars a year. He had managed to save a few thousand dollars, and this he now proposed to spend with Wynne in six months of European travel.

After a fortnight in the bracing air of the mill town, which was in the northern part of the State, he returned to New York completely reestablished in health and spirits and immediately called upon the Reverend Jim. And right here he encountered a strong check to his triumphal march.

"How is Wynne?" were the first words of this unselfish worker.

"Oh, she's fine, from all accounts," Lorrie answered.

"From all accounts? Isn't she with you?"

"Why, no," Lorrie answered. "I haven't seen her yet."

"Haven't seen her! And you've been

here a month?" The red face grew redder.

"Well," said Lorrie, "I thought I'd better wait until I got my business straightened out."

The Reverend Jim leaned back in his desk chair with a sigh of anger and disgust.

"And to think," said he, "that I should have been fool enough to marry as sweet and lovely a girl as Wynne to a mud turtle like you! Why, confound you, Lorrie, I've had reason enough to regret it without any help from you! Oh, the devil! You make me sick! Well, all I can say is that I hope she'll be glad to see you, which I very much doubt."

Lorrie looked startled.

"You doubt it?" he echoed. "Why?"

"Why, you silly ass? Just because she fell into your arms like a ripe peach, do you think she's going to do it every time you condescend to favor her with your noble attentions? Why should she? You've been a rotten poor husband, if you ask me. You spoiled her good time at Miraflores by grouching all the time and never showing her the slightest attention. You were obviously jealous of her success, instead of being glad and proud of it and telling her so. You got drunk the night you left her for a long separation—so drunk that you couldn't get up to give her a farewell wave when we went to sea. Your letters have been curt and short, without any affection in them or particular inquiry as to her happiness or well-being, although she was visiting people who, for all their kindness, are very new friends. Of course I suppose you did manage to send her a wire on your wedding anniversary?" He glared at Lorrie with an angry challenge in his keen blue eyes.

"Why—no. You see, Jim——"

"Do you mean to say that you neglected that, too? Well, upon my word but you are the limit! No!" He raised



a warning hand, for Lorrie, red and white by turns and looking thoroughly frightened and ashamed, was trying to get in a word in his own defense. "Let me finish, now that I've got started. You were jealous that night Donny gave her the rubies for having saved his life at the risk of her own. You showed it, too, though fortunately nobody noticed it, probably, but Harold and I. What present have you ever given her besides food and lodging and the clothes she wore? Why, she hasn't even got an engagement ring! And what did she give you? Everything she had to give, and that's saying a lot for Wynne. Oh, get out! I don't want to talk to you!"

His invective left Lorrie quite pale.

"Did Wynne tell you all this?" he asked.

"Most of it. Why shouldn't she? I've been a better friend than you. A woman has got to have somebody she can turn to in her trouble."

"But look here, Jim," said Lorrie contritely, "if you knew what an awful lot I've had to worry about——"

"No doubt. All the more reason why you should have thought often of Wynne if you really loved her." He clasped his hands behind his big head and stared at Lorrie thoughtfully. "I wonder if you really do."

"Of course I do! If I didn't write to her oftener, it was because I didn't want to bother her with all the beastly business. Besides, I was feeling pretty rotten most of the time. Nobody will ever know how I missed her."

"Well, then, the best thing for you to do is to paddle up to Moosehead and tell her so."

Lorrie went forth in a very thoughtful and chastened frame of mind. He did not believe that Wynne's feeling for him could have changed, but he was quite able to realize that he had probably hurt her very deeply by his apparent neglect, for he would not ad-

mit that it was actual neglect. His sureness of her was not due to conceit, but to a certain lack of imagination. Because Wynne had always been devoted and complacent and affectionate and had never questioned his decisions, he had taken her enduring love quite for granted, just as he did the loyalty of his friends.

But now that his cares and worries were things of the past, his natural optimism quickly returned. He decided that the Reverend Jim was tired and cross and had exaggerated his delinquencies, and that as soon as he should have explained matters to Wynne, all would be as it ought. It did irk him, however, to think that he should have overlooked the engagement ring, and this error he proceeded immediately to repair as best he might. Going at once to a leading jeweler's, he bought a very beautiful ring with a single large pearl encircled by small diamonds.

His next considerable outlay was in the matter of clothes, for his scant wardrobe was decidedly shabby. In the fashionable tailor's to which he addressed himself, he met an old college friend, and in the course of the conversation, Lorrie mentioned his plans for the summer.

"If you want a good manservant," said his friend, "I can send you one who will be just your affair. He's a young Frenchman, the brother of my valet. He's been over here about a year, and now he's homesick and wants to get back to France. He understands motors, and he's smart and honest and willing."

The upshot of it was that Lorrie, after a few minutes' conversation with Etienne, decided to engage him then and there. The idea of descending on the camp in shining raiment and attended by his valet tickled his fancy. He would show them all that he could be as smart as anybody, given the proper chance. If they thought him a

grubbing stick-in-the-mud, he would show them where they were wrong. With this pleasant idea in view, he spared no expense in the matter of his wardrobe; so when, a few days later, he got aboard the train, he was a spectacle to cure ophthalmia.

The situation was rather a peculiar one. There was Wynne waiting to greet and comfort her beaten and discouraged husband, whom she pictured worn and weary and probably with the mud and fever of the Zone still clinging to his person; a husband whom she felt she no longer deeply loved, but for whom she was loyally prepared to make any sacrifice that might tend to his rehabilitation. And here was Lorrie, glowing with high vitality, as physically fit as a prize fighter before a big event, cocky, self-satisfied, dressed to the last notch of elegance, attended by his manservant and fairly exuding prosperity.

Wynne went to the station to meet him, but when the train rolled in and the passengers got out, she looked about for him in vain. Some distance down the platform she saw an immaculately clad young man who somewhat suggested Lorrie in figure, though he seemed bigger and wore a mustache. Then suddenly he turned, and she saw that it was Lorrie.

A wave of diffidence swept through Wynne, and at the same moment Lorrie discovered her. His face lightened, and he sprang to meet her. The next instant she found herself in his arms, and his bristling lip gave her a shock that was almost painful.

"Wynne dear!" said he, and, loosing his clasp, he looked into her face, then drew her to him again. "No need to ask you how you are!"

"Nor you, Lorrie," Wynne answered, a little breathlessly. "I'm so glad. I was afraid that all you've been through might have quite used you up."

"No fear," he answered gayly. "On the contrary, it's had the opposite effect.

Never felt so fit in my life. How is everybody?"

"All very well, Lorrie, and impatient to see you. Cécile and Harold are waiting in the launch."

"By Jove, but you're looking great, Wynne!" said Lorrie, and his blue eyes kindled as they swept her from head to foot. The color flamed in Wynne's face under this scrutiny. She had felt nothing like such shyness on her wedding day.

Directions were given as to the luggage, and they started for the landing, Lorrie talking a steady stream in his quick, staccato way.

"You see, Wynne, I've got a bully program ahead. We're going to Europe, and there we're going to buy a car and go off for a good six months' tour. All around the shop—châteaux and ruins and gondolas and Alps and all the rest of it. We're going to have the time of our lives, and if anybody ever says 'canal' to me, I'll heave a wrench at him."

"But, Lorrie," answered Wynne, almost wondering if his worries had not left him with delusions of grandeur, "how can we afford it?"

"Just leave that to me, little girl. I've got a corking new job to take over the first of the year. Meanwhile, I'm paid a retainer. Besides that, my mill interests have bucked up and are going strong. There's plenty of money in sight, and now we're going to spend a little of it before we buckle down again."

He rattled along, while Wynne listened in a chaos of emotions that she could not have described as pleasant or the reverse. It seemed to her that a stranger filled with jaunty assurance had come to preempt Lorrie's place, and she strongly resented this unknown person's fatuous self-confidence in her acceptance of him as a substitute.

They reached the landing, and Wynne did not miss Cécile's peculiar

expression or the flicker of Applebo's blond lashes as they greeted Lorrie. Thereafter, both seemed laboring under some suppressed emotion which Wynne correctly divined to be mirth. She had already warned them that they must make due allowances if they found Lorrie worn and tired and rather out at elbows, though she had not put it in precisely that way. And here he was as sleek and shining as a new motor car, buzzing away like the smoothly running, impatient engines of such. This simile was evolved in the whimsical brain of Applebo.

"All he needs now is a horn and a free exhaust," murmured the poet in Wynne's ear.

Wynne could never have believed it possible for a person to be so transformed in a few short weeks, and as she listened to Lorrie's persiflage and observed him covertly through narrowed lids, her growing diffidence began to be mingled with resentment. Why couldn't he have let her know of his good fortune, let her share his confidence and be prepared in some measure for his changed condition? She reflected that Lorrie had always taken too much for granted, but now he had gone too far. She determined to show him that if he had changed, he was not the only one. This feeling of aloofness, once started, grew like a mango tree under the wand of an Indian fakir, and presently, when Lorrie was in animated conversation with the inwardly laughing Applebo, who was missing no detail of the trago-comedy, Wynne said in a low voice to Cécile:

"Do please put him in another room! I can't seem to get used to him."

A mischievous gleam shone in Cécile's laughing eyes. She gave Wynne's hand a little squeeze.

"Leave it to me," she whispered. "I'll manage. But are you quite sure, dear? He's really got very handsome

—and his mustache is so becoming! *Ouch!*"

For Wynne had given her a "twisted pinch."

It was, therefore, a rather crestfallen conqueror who was shown to a spacious apartment which was obviously destined for his sole occupancy. Whatever he may have thought, however, he managed pretty well to conceal. Cécile had more difficulty with her own emotions when he opened a door with an expectant air and looked into a smaller room in which Etienne's effects had been deposited, then opened that opposite and surveyed a shower bath.

"Wynne thought you'd be more comfortable here, Lorrie," said she, in her limpid voice. "You see, you've got your man right next, and your own bath. Besides, Wynne has got so in the habit of rooming alone that she's grown to prefer it."

Lorrie gave a mirthless little laugh.

"Well," said he, "I'll have to get to work to cure her of that."

"I'm afraid it's going to take some doing," replied Cécile, trying to make her tone sweetly sympathetic. "Poor Wynne must find you quite a stranger. You see, it's not only the long separation, but you are really rather changed. Of course your mustache makes quite a difference in your looks."

"I'll shave the darn' thing off," said Lorrie.

"That might help," Cécile admitted. "It's very becoming, but Wynne's not used to it. You'd better go slowly, Lorrie. You're not going to find Wynne such an easy conquest as you did the first time."

She went out, closing the door after her, and Lorrie, staring at his blank face in the glass, thought he heard her rippling laugh in the distance.

He had not, however, much time for reflection, as luncheon was announced. At table he was placed opposite Wynne, and as his excitement began to subside

and his mental balance to return to its normal level, he found himself studying his beautiful young wife with a new and intensely admiring interest. He was forced to admit that Wynne had certainly undergone a very distinct, though subtle, change. There was nothing left of the fluttering animation, with the quick, questioning glances and the nervous little movements of head and hands, which he had often remarked at Miraflores, none of the excited laughter and sentences begun abruptly and left unfinished. She had poise, sureness, repose of manner. Her conversation was bright and animated, but to the point.

After luncheon, when the party broke up to stroll about, Wynne disappeared, and Lorrie, rather embarrassed, asked to be shown her room. He knocked, and Wynne answered cheerily:

"Come in, Lorrie."

It pleased him to have her recognize his step. He went in and found her lacing up her high tramping boots.

"I thought you might like to walk about and see something of the place," said Wynne pleasantly. "Later on, when it's cooler, we can go on the lake in one of the canoes."

Lorrie agreed and, leaning against the foot of the bed, watched her for a moment in silence. Her round arms were bare to the elbow; her blouse, V-shaped in front, showed the soft skin of her throat; and there was a soft flush on her cheeks as she straightened up and drew the blouse snugly down over her full bosom. Her lips, very red from an abundance of rich blood, were very alluring to Lorrie, as indeed they were to most men who saw them. The upper was drawn slightly upward in a pout that was almost improper in its nymphlike invitation, a demoralizing mouth. But there was nothing soft or voluptuous in the set or expression of the long gray eyes, which looked

out steadily through their fringe of black lashes.

Lorrie, regarding her wistfully, was struck by a fresh and vigorous appreciation of her charm. The blood mounted suddenly to his head. He had a swift and almost irresistible desire to stride across the room and take her in his arms, but managed to control it. Six months ago, it would never have occurred to him to put the brake on any such impulse. He and Wynne had never quarreled, and the nearest that Wynne had ever come actually to asserting herself where Lorry was concerned had been aboard the *Sea Flower*.

But now this relative attitude was changed. Some subtle atmosphere of aloofness about Wynne held Lorrie at his distance, and he was conscious of a curious embarrassment.

"I guess Jim was right," said he presently, as if to himself.

"About what?" Wynne asked, without looking up.

"About my finding you changed—about your not being as glad to see me as I am to see you. Good Lord, Wynne, don't you love me any more?"

She looked at him thoughtfully.

"I love you, Lorrie," she answered softly, "but I'm afraid that I'm not in love with you. I'm sorry, dear, but there are some things we can't help."

"But, Wynne," he protested, "you're my wife!"

She nodded.

"Yes," she answered, "I'm your wife. But I hope you won't insist too much upon it, Lorrie."

Her voice was gentle, but there was no mistaking her meaning or the cool, steady look of her eyes as they rested on his. Lorrie turned rather pale.

"That's about the worst knock I've had yet," said he. "But you needn't worry, Wynne. I shan't insist."

"Thank you, dear," she answered, smoothing back her hair. "I didn't think you would."

Lorrie was silent for a moment. Wynne, glancing at him, saw in his face the first resemblance to the Lorrie of old. Some of the lines of care seemed to have returned, and his expression had lost its complacency. She felt sorry for him, but that was all.

"Are you in love with anybody else?" he asked bluntly.

"No," Wynne answered. "I'm not in love with anybody at all. For a long time I tried my best to keep on loving you just the same, Lorrie, but as the months passed, and you seemed to have forgotten all about me, it grew less and less, and finally the little flame went out. I'm sorry, dear. Just a loving word of yours from time to time might have kept it alive, but that never came. I know you were worried and anxious and working terribly hard, but it wouldn't have taken long to have scribbled, 'I love you, Wynne,' on a scrap of paper and put it in an envelope and sent it to me. That would have been enough."

Lorrie's face was funereal.

"I see, Wynne," he answered quietly. "I'm all the different kinds of a fool that Jim called me. Just plain fool!" He sighed, then reached in his pocket and drew out a little packet. "I've brought you a present," he said, rather awkwardly. "Don't think of it as a bribe or a peace offering or anything like that. I'd have given it to you long ago if I hadn't been such a silly ass that I never thought of it. Like my forgetting to wire you on our wedding day. It's your engagement ring."

Wynne took the little case, opened it, took out the beautiful ring, and slipped it on her finger. It fitted perfectly, Lorrie having got the measure from his own little finger, which he knew to be the same size as Wynne's third. For a moment she examined the gift through half-closed eyes.

"It's superb," said she softly. "Thank you, dear."

She offered him her face, and Lorrie, restraining the impulse to crush his lips against hers, kissed her cheek.

"That's an engagement ring, Wynne," said he. "Will you consider it as such?"

Wynne looked at him in surprise.

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"Well," said Lorrie, with a forced smile, "the way things stand between us now, the fact of our being married doesn't seem to count for anything. We were never really engaged. There wasn't time. Now suppose we just pretend that we never have been married and are just engaged. Then if I can't make you feel that you love me again, let's say in three months' time, you can have your freedom, if you want it. Will you consider yourself engaged to me, Wynne?"

Wynne smiled.

"That's not a bad idea, Lorrie," said she.

"Then you agree?" he asked eagerly.

"Yes. But I ought to warn you that I don't think there's very much chance of my feeling as I did before."

"I realize that," he answered soberly. "It's up to me. I appreciate the fact that, when we first met, you were lonely and disheartened and all that. There was a lot of luck in it, for me. As Jim said, it won't be so easy this time. It's mighty good of you to give me another chance, Wynne." This from the imperious Lorrie!

Wynne looked up quickly.

"Did Jim suggest this idea of being engaged?" she asked.

"No. I just thought of it this moment. But he did remind me that I'd never given you any present. Might as well own up. Honestly, Wynne, I never thought of it one way or the other, though of course that's no excuse. But I hope I'm beginning to get a little sense—now that it may be too late," he concluded bitterly.

Wynne regarded him seriously. If



her manner had been cold, resentful, scornful, or if she had then and there refused to accept the ring and reproached him bitterly for his callousness and neglect, Lorrie's heart would have sunk less deeply than it did at her quiet, unemotional friendliness. The former attitude would have indicated a certain passionate regret at the loss of something precious, whereas the latter seemed to announce the peaceful demise of a beloved, though transient, guest of the soul, leaving only ashes and tender memories.

"I should like to encourage you, Lorrie, but I don't really think I ought," she answered softly. "There are some things quite beyond our control. But don't be downhearted, dear. After all, it wasn't long enough to spoil either of our lives. Now let's go for our walk."

#### CHAPTER XV.

If Lorrie could have had his way, he would have carried Wynne off immediately to Europe, arguing that his chances of recovering that which he had lost through his own crass stupidity must perforce be infinitely better than while she was surrounded by friends who had become to her as a family.

But Wynne quietly declined to leave the camp at once. She wanted first to be sure that Lorrie would hold strictly to the letter of his proposition, making no attempt to coerce her into the renewal of relations which she knew would leave her cold. She had learned the ecstatic bliss of loving, as well as the lesser joy of being loved, and she had no intention of entering upon a long life of dutiful, but uninspired, conjugality.

Now that the break had come, it seemed to her far better to take Lorrie at his word and get a divorce rather than try to make the best of failure. She preferred marital bankruptcy to

the drudgery of trying to carry on the business with no capital. Her heart was very far from being broken. Her married life had been of too short a duration, and the cooling process too gradual, for any such catastrophe. She had loved ardently as a girl and she had no doubt of her capacity to love even more ardently as a ripened woman. If Lorrie had it in him to make her feel for him what she had felt before, Wynne asked nothing better, but she doubted his ability to accomplish this.

The sympathetic hosts and hostesses of these married betrothed found a good deal that was puzzling in their conduct. Lorrie and Wynne were very much together, seemed to be friendly and sympathetic and to be having a perfectly good time, yet every one felt the invisible barrier. Wynne's manner was precisely that of a newly engaged girl who is fond of her fiancé, but not yet sufficiently sure of herself to fix the wedding day. There was just one person whose masked acuteness pierced to the core of the situation, and that, of course, was Applebo. Glancing casually at her hand one day when Wynne was with him in a canoe, he observed:

"That's really a very pretty ring. May I be permitted to congratulate you upon your engagement?"

"Has Lorrie told you?" asked Wynne, without stopping to think.

"No more than you have," he answered languidly, but she caught a flash in the slumbrous amber eyes.

Wynne flushed with vexation, then laughed.

"You may," she answered, "but please don't announce it to anybody."

"No fear. Do you mind my asking if the date has been set for the nuptials?"

"It has not. Very possibly it may never be."

"That's a pity," murmured Applebo, "especially as you and Lorrie are planning a European tour. Think of the



scandal! Also the additional expense of separate rooms in hotels and steamers and other places! Better soften your heart, Wynne. Lorrie is really becoming quite human again. The plumes of Prince Charming are molting. Also, he's growing thin and pale." He sighed. "I once passed through a similar experience with Hermione. My prompt action was all that saved a domestic tragedy."

"What did you do?"

"It was after my enforced absence in Norway to dispose of some inherited property in Christiana. Because an indiscreet countess whom I met on the ship wrote me a kindly letter—which Hermione most unjustifiably opened and read while I was out sailing—she offered me her cheek on my return and a separate room. Having a gentle nature, I can support cheek from almost anybody, but not from the wife of my bosom. The separate room was unendurably cold, so I enticed Hermione aboard the *Eglantine* for what she erroneously thought to be a day's sail, as I had given all hands but the Finn shore liberty. I had nicely timed our outing to catch a northeasterly gale, and we ran a hundred miles to sea and hove to. It took a little doing on the part of the three of us to shorten sail, and in the course of the maneuver I got a wop on the conch from a foresheet block. Hermione sewed up the rip in my scalp, and when I regained consciousness, she was kissing me." He ducked his head, parted his yellow mane, and showed a long, white scar. "She's a very good sempstress. 'Prophet and priestess, we returned from the dawning.' Listen to that loon laughing at the story!"

He dipped his paddle, gave a powerful stroke, and snapped the slender ash close to the blade. Grabbing the lower fragment, he inspected it sadly.

"What a pity that couldn't have been broken across Lorrie's gluteal mus-

cles!" he observed. "But that may happen yet, after you're remarried. Hermione once snapped several strings of a new racket on my elbow because I took one of her balls and drove it into the net. A whack, a hug, a kick, a kiss—so runs the course of true love. Quarrels are separations of the soul, and, like separations of the body, they justify their occasion in the joy of reunion. Is there another paddle in the canoe?"

"No," Wynne answered, "and there's a shower coming up the lake."

"Then I shall have to use my flappers." He lowered himself to a sitting position in the bottom of the canoe and, with a big hand on either side, sent them swirling in toward the landing. The muscular effort must have been considerable, but Applebo did not seem conscious of it. Lady Audrey, who was fishing from the end of the jetty, snorted angrily at their approach.

"Stop that, you big booby!" cried she. "You're scaring all my fish! Have you no paddle?"

"Alas, no, Audrey dear!" purred Applebo. "I was confiding to Wynne the depth of my hopeless passion for a certain lady"—he gave her a languishing look—"and in my emotion, I thoughtlessly bit the paddle in two." He picked up the broken blade and offered it to her as they glided alongside. "Take it!" he groaned. "Tie a pink ribbon around it in a true lovers' knot and hang it in your trophy room! Where is Chat? I promised to take him trout shooting. I've found a little pool that is excellent for the sport. All you have to do is throw in a grasshopper and keep it covered with an automatic pistol—"

He ducked, but not quickly enough to scape the flat of the blade, which landed on his shock of yellow hair.

Leaving the pair to finish their squabble, Wynne walked up the path and met Lorrie on his way to the house.

He was in a linen duster, stained and soiled, and he had a smudge across his nose.

"Look here, Wynne," said he, "I'm not getting a square deal!"

"What's the matter?" Wynne asked.

"Well, there seems to be a sort of conspiracy against me. Every time I try to go anywhere with you, somebody sidetracks me. This afternoon, I thought we'd go and explore Indian Island, that Harold was telling us about, and Cécile turns me to adjusting the motor pump."

Applebo, fleeing up the path pursued by Lady Audrey, overheard the remark and halted.

"Better wait until the full of the moon and then go after dinner," said he. "You might see something interesting. There's an old Indian graveyard there, and the guides say that if you go there and sit perfectly still, you may see a ghost dance. My Finn, who is a warlock of sorts, went out there one night, and they gave him a great show. The moon will be full in about three nights."

"Well, then, we'll pay 'em a call," said Lorrie.

There was no question in the minds of all as to the vast improvement in Lorrie's social proclivities. Whereas, at Miraflores, he had been taciturn and preoccupied, he now entered into the amusements of the camp with zest and spirit. He joked in his staccato way, was always ready for any sort of sport or picnic, vied with Applebo in various "stunts" for the edification of the others, and made himself generally useful and entertaining. He even kissed Hermione on her birthday and presented her with a .22 repeating rifle, lost money at bridge to Lady Audrey, and shot clay pigeons with Charteris.

And all the while he played the rôle of humble and ardent suitor to his wife-betrothed, much to the secret amuse-

ment of the others, who were beginning to guess at the situation. Wynne, observing him at first with a sort of pitying curiosity and later with a certain shy aloofness, gave him scant encouragement. But whereas, in the beginning, she had been rather amused at Applebo's sly cynicisms, she now began to resent them. Applebo, observing this irritation with his inward laugh, redoubled them, his object being, of course, to arouse Wynne's partisanship for her probationer.

"I'm deeply disappointed in Lorrie," he said one day. "When he arrived here with his brand-new valise and his brand-new valet and his brand-new clothes and mustache and things, I had hopes of his becoming an elegant like Donny and me."

"Do you consider yourself an elegant?" derided Wynne. "When you don't look like a shanghaied Swede, you look like a joke, in your frilled mauve shirts and those sashes you wear around your neck! And that mop on your head! I wonder that some time, when you've been lying under a tree composing a silly ode, some cow hasn't given you a hair cut."

Applebo waved his hand.

"Lorrie is slumping into his former slovenly ways," said he. "I fear he'll never be a macaroni."

"Nor a macaroon, thank goodness!" retorted Wynne. "You leave Lorrie alone!"

"As you are not doing," murmured Applebo. "It's a pity. I had hoped better things for you than Lorrie, my dear. Do you think it right or worthy of you to glide back into the gulf of despond from which you were just beginning to emerge? And Lorrie—for with all of his many deficiencies he means well. You're both young, and there's ample time for you to reconstruct your lives. Married to some sweet woman—preferably a little older than himself—who loved him devotedly

and possessed the patience and experience of the world to condone his failures, Lorrie might be very, very happy." He sighed, looked at Wynne, and blinked.

"And I?" asked Wynne, determined that he should not get a rise out of her.

"Ah, I fear that you are the stuff from which grass widows are made! Your unfortunate excess of temperament! You're a neglected garden, from which spring roses and thistles side by side, jasmine and catnip, Johnny-jump-ups and hollyhocks, bleeding hearts and Dutchman's-breeches, night-blooming cereus, wild concubines—I mean columbines——"

"And pigweed and skunk cabbage and poison ivy—and——"

"Bittersweet. I see you've caught my fanciful metaphor. What you need is a gardener who will not shirk his job—a gentleman gardener with a long roll, who plants for pleasure and is on the job early and late, not one who permits his industry to lapse into fitful sprinklings of cold water."

Wynne regarded him ominously.

"Some day," said she, "I shall certainly do you a damage, Harold dear."

"Pray don't. Hermione keeps me sufficiently frazzled out around the edges as it is. In one respect—but one, fortunately—I am something like Lorrie. I have an honest heart, and my intentions are beyond question."

These mock-serious parables of Applebo left Wynne in a state of irritated amusement, but furnished her also with food for thought. Of course she knew that he was merely trying to bait her, but all the same she wondered if perhaps they might not contain some grain of deeper truth. Was it not possible that Lorrie might be happier with such a woman as Applebo had pictured? The idea was strangely distasteful to Wynne.

And as for herself? Was she really

a neglected garden, with the rank and the refined struggling for supremacy? Would foul weeds grow in a really nice garden, even if neglected? Or was it something in the soil which encouraged them and gave them the ascendancy over roses and lilies? Wynne was rather troubled. She did not try to disguise from herself the fact that the tares were there. She reflected, also, that she had not made the moral effort she might have done to keep them out. She thought of certain indulgences of thought and fancy, and the hot blood rose to her face. Lorrie, she was sure, although neglectful, had never wavered even in thought from the strictest fidelity to her.

She confided some of this to Hermione, who made light of it.

"We all have our daydreams," said she, "and if they aren't always, precisely what we'd care to tell our husbands, there's no great harm done. All imaginative people play make-believe in their minds, men probably less than women, because their work is usually more interesting. Before I was married, I used to wander about alone a good deal and think all sorts of things. Lorrie's affection has never really waned," she added.

"What makes you think that?" Wynne asked.

"A little talk I had with him the other day. He told me that he couldn't enjoy himself much at Miraflores because everything there kept constantly reminding him how very little he was able to do for you, and the more he appreciated what a treasure you were, the more he began to wonder if perhaps he hadn't done you a big wrong to make you marry him out of hand before you had had a chance to see anything of the world and meet the right sort of people—your own sort. He admitted that a good deal of his neglect was due to his work and worry, but not all. Part of it was a sort of

test to which he was subjecting you. Of course it was stupid, but most new husbands are that."

"I wish I'd known," murmured Wynne. "Why hasn't he told me that himself?"

"Well, I don't think that excuses are much in Lorrie's line."

This information, in some respects true, though not entirely so, was offered over their morning coffee, for early breakfast was not a communal repast. The conversation was interrupted by Applebo, who had arisen before daybreak and gone out upon the lake. Being erratic of habit and given to solitary promenades at weird hours, no heed was taken of his goings out and comings in.

"What have you been up to, balmy one?" asked Hermione indifferently.

"I've been eavesdropping on the secrets of nature," he replied.

"Discover any scandals?"

"Alas, no! The world was still stunned from last evening's violent thunderstorm." He glanced at the sky. "The weather is going to change within the next twelve hours. To-morrow it'll be sweaters and apple cheeks. The wind is trying to get into the north. Full of the moon to-night. If you like, Wynne, I'll paddle you over to Indian Island after dinner. The time couldn't be more propitious for the spirit world to hold high jinks. It's the seventh day of the seventh month, and the heavenly bodies are in the right relations. What do you say?"

"Thanks," Wynne answered, "but I told Lorrie I'd go over there with him."

"That's a pity," sighed Applebo. "Lorrie is such a material creature that he's apt to spoil the whole show. I can't possibly imagine the spirit of a sachem or the wraith of a Minnehaha performing for Lorrie. You'll probably get nothing but the ha-ha from a lonely loon." And he departed in search of macaroons and tea.

## CHAPTER XVI.

The perfect reflection of lake and shore and starlit sky gave Wynne the sensation of hanging giddily in the center of a vast ethereal globe, as she and Lorrie dipped their paddles in silent rhythm, and the light canoe swam onward toward the distant island.

Halfway there, the moon rose, lambent silver in the high, cold draft of the north wind, which had not as yet sent down its frosty breath to ripple the burnished surface of the tourmaline lake. Yet it made its near presence felt in the snap and tingle of the keen night air, sweet and aromatic with woodland odors.

The little gurgle and suck as the paddles took the water was the only sound to break the primordial silence until they had almost reached the island, when a great barred owl challenged the night with its booming cry. The moon was silvering the pinetops as they grounded gently on a strip of sandy beach, stepped out, and hauled the canoe up half its length.

"It looks ghostly enough," said Wynne, with a little shiver. She had been brought up on a diet of habitant folklore, and was thoroughly familiar with the natural history of the nether world, or such of it as was reputed still to linger in the shadows of her own—vampires, witches, lost souls of evil potency, and the dreaded *loup-garou*. Hearing their footfalls, the great owl screeched raucously, and Wynne shrank closer to her fiancé.

"I don't think I care much for this place," she whispered. Wynne had never conquered her fear of the dark.

"We won't stay long," Lorrie answered. "It's getting cold, and we haven't much on. We should have brought our sweaters. Of course, Harold's ghost stuff is all rot, like most that he says. Where was he to-night?"

"Hermione didn't know—probably

out 'listening to nature's secrets.' He likes to prowls about in the full of the moon, like any other big cat."

"Well, now that we're here, we might as well have a look around," said Lorrie. "Let's go up and inspect that little cabin on the top of the bluff. We can get a bully view of the moonlight on the lake from there. Then we'd better go back. That shirt waist of yours isn't much protection, and it's getting colder every minute. The ghosts can wait."

Wynne agreed. They had been paddling *voyageur* fashion—which is, of course, the only way to handle a canoe—and her knees were stiff. She wanted to stretch her legs before starting back on the four-mile paddle to the camp. It was nice of Lorrie, she thought, to consider her comfort before his own desire to have her as long as possible to himself under these eerie conditions, which seemed to bring them more closely together than they had been for many months. It was like him. Where another man would have been quick to take advantage of their surroundings for the advancement of his own selfish interests, Lorrie thought first of the possibility of her catching a cold. Wynne crowded closer and rested her hand in the crook of his elbow.

The growth of pines that covered the little island was open, and the moonlight, filtering through, made their progress easy enough. The slope mounted gently to a low bluff where, with its back sheltered by the fringe of pines, nestled a roughly built log cabin that looked out upon the long expanse of lake. It had a chimney of flat stones plastered together with mud, a roof of warped, whipsawed planks, and two plank-shuttered windows and a door, the latter ajar and permitting a glimpse into the dark and uninviting interior.

An abandoned building of any sort holds always a certain curiosity for the

explorer, especially when located in some lonely spot. Lorrie stepped inside and struck a match. Then, catching sight of a candle end thrust into a bottle, he lighted it, and they both looked about.

"Why, the place seems to be inhabited," said Lorrie in surprise. "Look at this canned stuff on the table! And there's a loaf of fresh bread and a wedge of cheese!"

"And look at the bunk!" Wynne exclaimed. "Those hemlock boughs are freshly cut, and that's a perfectly good blanket. Somebody must be camping here."

"But if there were," objected Lorrie, "there'd be a fire, and the chimney's cold. I tell you what—whoever was here probably got driven out by that shower last night. Look at the roof. It's like a sieve, and the floor's still pretty wet. They probably got soaked and decided that it wasn't worth while to spend an uncomfortable night. So after the rain was over, they beat it for the shore."

"But they must be coming back," said Wynne, who was prying about and had opened a roughly made locker in one corner of the cabin. "Here are quite a lot of tinned things—soup and pork and beans and a piece of bacon and some eggs and a jar of marmalade—enough to last two people a couple of days."

"They were probably wet and mad and didn't want to bother," Lorrie said. He felt of the blanket on the bunk. It had been rolled up and shoved into a dry corner, but the hemlock boughs were dripping. "Very likely some chap and his wife, who thought they'd like to rough it for a couple of days, but changed their minds." He laughed. "Maybe Harold's ghosts ran 'em out of the place."

Wynne raised her hand.

"Listen!" said she. "I hear voices!"

They stepped to the door and looked



out. The cold, brilliant moon was mounting rapidly, and in its silvery "bridge" they saw a small, silently running launch which was not more than three hundred yards away and appeared to be heading for the little strip of beach where they had left their canoe. The voices had ceased, but they could plainly distinguish two figures in the stern.

"They must be coming back," said Lorrie. "Let's clear out."

The launch shot swiftly out of sight behind the pines, and the low hum of its motor was lost in the murmur of a fresh little breeze which had sprung up and was sighing through the tree-tops. Lorrie snuffed the candle and they went out.

"Let's go look at the burying ground and then start back," said he. "It's getting colder every minute, and you're dressed rather for Miraflores than the State of Maine."

In the middle of the island, which was perhaps a quarter of a mile in width, there was a little plateau where the trees grew more sparsely and here, as Applebo had said, the ground was studded with small stones set upright, which Lorrie compared to almonds stuck into the top of a cake. They did not linger to examine this Indian graveyard, as the wind was rising steadily and it was rapidly growing colder. As they turned back into the thicker growth, Wynne gave a little shiver.

"I don't think I'd care to come here by myself," said she. "I hate the dark, and I hate to be alone. I don't see how you stood it at the bungalow."

"It wasn't very gay," Lorrie answered, "but when everything got sticky and soggy and moldy, I was mighty glad that I *was* alone and that you weren't there. It would have been pretty sad for you, Wynne, especially as I had to be away a good deal."

"Did you really and truly miss me, Lorrie?"

"I should say I did!"

"Poor Lorrie," said Wynne gently, and the slight pressure she gave his hand set Lorrie's heart to thumping so that he wondered if Wynne could hear it.

"Of course," said he, "if I'd had any idea the separation was going to make you feel differently toward me, I'd have chucked the business months ago. Wouldn't have stayed if the whole success or failure of the blooming ditch had depended on me alone. But I thought you'd understand, and, besides, I was hoping from week to week that they'd send down somebody who could take over my work. I'll admit, though, that I did leave Miraflores in rather a huff. I couldn't get it out of my head that you'd been prepared to sacrifice your life to save another man, without stopping to think about me."

Wynne laughed softly.

"But I hadn't any intention of sacrificing my life, Lorrie," she protested. "What I meant to do was to run past the bull at a safe distance and draw its attention from Donny. You know I'm not much of a horsewoman, and I got rattled and managed to rattle the poor mule, too. I told them all that, but they seemed to think it was just modesty on my part. Then I wouldn't have accepted the rubies if Donny hadn't put it in such a way that I couldn't refuse them without hurting his feelings. You needn't be jealous of Donny. You'll never have a better friend, my dear. He never stopped telling me what a splendid man you were and that I did very wrong to feel as I couldn't help doing when weeks passed without any word from you."

"Donny's the salt of the earth," said Lorrie. "I think I begin to understand. I wish you could, Wynne," he added wistfully.

Wynne gave his hand a gentle pressure.

"I think I do," she answered. "The



trouble now is not so much my not understanding as my having misunderstood." She sighed. "It's rather like blowing out a match and then trying to make it burn again when you find that you still need it."

"Well, it's always something to feel that you still need it," Lorrie answered. "My match isn't out by a long shot, and if I can't manage to relight yours from it, I'll know the reason why!"

Wynne did not answer. She was pondering on Lorrie's metaphor and wondering if such a thing were possible. On that mysterious little island, with its lights and shadows, its aromatic odors of balsam and fern, and Lorrie, the old Lorrie, explaining in his boyish way the reasons for his apparent neglect, she felt in a softer mood than she had for many months. She realized that while she had had her bad times, so had he. She could picture him toiling in the sodden reek, and his return to the lonely, sodden little bungalow to eat an unappetizing meal, sleep a moist and unrefreshing sleep, and rise in the dripping dawn, still tired, to return to his thankless work.

And yet, for all her sympathy, there was something lacking. With all of her friendly and maternal impulses aroused, the conjugal one remained unstirred. She wondered if Lorrie really wanted her as much as he claimed. He was gentle and tender, but Wynne was not conscious of any underlying passion. He had made no attempt to take advantage of their romantic surroundings by even so much as squeezing her hand. Wynne thought sadly of the ardor of their early married life, and the night chill seemed to strike more deeply.

They emerged on the little beach where they had left the canoe; then stopped and stared blankly first at the water's edge, then at each other. The canoe was not there.

"What the deuce!" Lorrie exclaimed. "Where has it gone?"

"It couldn't have floated off by itself!" cried Wynne. "You hauled it almost clear of the water. Look, there are the marks!"

"Those confounded people in the launch must have swiped it," Lorrie growled.

"But why should they?" Wynne demanded. "Nobody ever does that sort of thing here. People leave their boats anywhere."

"I think I understand," said Lorrie. "It's intended for a practical joke. It was probably meant for a joke on the pair who were camping in the cabin. Very likely the people in the launch knew them and, seeing the light in the windows, thought they were still here or had come back and decided to play them a trick, darn them!" He looked at Wynne and laughed.

"But how are we going to get back?" cried Wynne.

"I don't believe we are—to-night. The family will probably turn in as usual at about half past ten, thinking that we may not leave the island until after midnight, seeing we went off on a ghost-stalking expedition. They won't discover our absence until to-morrow morning."

Wynne stared at him for a moment, aghast. Then she, too, laughed. But it was rather a cold and nervous laugh.

"Well, the joke is certainly on us, Lorrie," said she.

"It sure is—for to-night," he answered rather ominously. He was thinking that there was a bad time ahead for some practical joker. "No use fooling around here. You must be frozen, Wynne."

"I've been warmer," she admitted. "We might as well go back to the cabin and make the best of it."

So back to the cabin they went, and there, by the brilliant light of the moon, the gleaming face of which must certainly have worn an ironic expression, they collected a supply of pine cones

and dead branches, which they stacked up beside the fireplace. A roaring blaze lent immediate cheer to the interior, while the wisps of aromatic wood smoke banished the damp, moldy smells. The vigorous exercise of gathering fuel warmed them and banished their indignation, and presently Lorrie proceeded to overhaul the food supply.

"How about some hot tomato soup?"

"And some scrambled eggs!"

"By Jove—here are half a dozen bottles of Pilsner!"

"And some pickles," murmured Wynne, looking over his shoulder. "It might really be worse, mightn't it?"

"You bet!" Lorrie proceeded to close the door and shutters, the chimney by this time drawing well and the smoke having dissipated. He picked up a tin bucket. "I'll go get some water."

When he returned, Wynne had beaten down the fire a little and was toasting some bread over the glowing coals. The ruddy glow was reflected from her soft throat and bare, round arms and revealing unsuspected colors in her dark, tumbled hair. Lorrie paused on the threshold for a moment and regarded her with a rush of warm emotion.

"I could stand a lot of this without being tied," said he, setting down his bucket. "It's blowing harder and harder all the time. The lake's all white. If this keeps on, we may be in for another night of it."

"Don't care if we are," Wynne answered. "I like it." She placed the toast in the chimney corner and rose. "Just listen to that!" said she, as a gust of wind roared in the chimney. "Harold was right. He said it was going to blow."

They rinsed out the cooking things and, finding a can opener on a nail, proceeded to prepare a supper of tomato soup, eggs and bacon, pork and beans, and mustard pickles, the whole washed down with drafts of sparkling Pilsner

from their tin quart cups. Outside, the gusty flaws of the rushing north wind made a rising and falling diapason of chimney song and moaning pines and the crashing of the miniature surf at the foot of the low cliffs.

Their supper finished, Lorrie built up the fire, then dragged the hemlock boughs and blanket before the blaze.

"They might have left us another blanket," he observed, "but probably the bride was wet and cold and baled herself up in the others."

"Why 'the bride?'" Wynne asked. "They may have been two men."

"I don't think so," he answered. "I have a hunch that these preparations were made for a newly married pair. In the first place, it wouldn't be much of a joke to maroon a couple of men. In the second, the other bunk is bare. A good many fools think it funny to play practical jokes on a bride and groom. Besides, two men wouldn't have been chased out by a shower. Also, they'd have brought more beer." He threw another branch on the fire. "I'd better get more wood," said he. "At the rate this stuff burns, we'll soon run shy."

"I'll help," said Wynne.

So out they went into the clear, wind-swept night, and in half an hour had replenished the fuel supply sufficiently to last until morning. Then, side by side, they sat on the rough bench and stared into the dancing flames. Neither felt sleepy. The wind excited them, while their unexpected situation furnished food for many reflections.

"They'll be frightened to death tomorrow morning when they find that we haven't come back," said Wynne presently.

"We can't help that," Lorrie answered. He glanced at his watch. "Great Scott, it's after midnight! Aren't you tired, Wynne?"

She shook her head and continued to stare into the dancing flames. For a

few minutes neither spoke. Presently Wynne said, as if thinking aloud:

"It must have been rather nice to be a pioneer and live in a cabin like this, not bothered by all the troublesome things there are to spoil our lives to-day."

"I was thinking precisely the same," Lorrie answered. "Of course, there were hardships and Indians, but there are worse things than those."

"Much," Wynne answered.

She leaned back. Lorrie rested his shoulders against the rim of the table and, slipping his arm behind her, drew her gently to him. Wynne resisted faintly for an instant, then yielded, finding much comfort in his strong support. Lorrie felt her hair against his cheek and kissed it softly.

"After all," said he, in a low voice which seemed to have fallen in pitch, "what's the use of yachts and big houses and a lot of clothes and long dinners and wines and things? A canoe is more fun than a yacht and a lot healthier, and you can only sleep in one room and wear one suit of clothes and eat one meal at a time, and—and love one woman——"

"At a time," Wynne interrupted, with a laugh, but her breath was coming quickly.

"No, in all time!" said Lorrie, almost in a growl. "People who think that they can love more than once fool themselves. They want to fool themselves. The chances are they have only partly loved."

"What do you know about love, Lorrie?" murmured Wynne.

"I know that much," he answered. "I never loved anybody until I met you—never fooled myself about it, either. I could no more love another woman than I could grow a new right hand if I lost this one."

"What makes you so sure?"

"You do."

Wynne sighed.

"I'm afraid I haven't been a very useful right hand to you, Lorrie," said she.

"You have when you had the chance. You would be still, if I hadn't been a blind fool. Oh, Wynne, Wynne, don't you think that you might be again some day?"

His voice choked in his throat. Wynne turned her head slowly and looked into his face. Lorrie's eyes were full of tears. Wynne, resting against his left side, could feel the pounding of his heart. But the tears distressed her. She could never have imagined the possibility of tears in Lorrie's steady and often hard eyes.

A wave of warm emotion swept through her. It seemed almost that she could feel the ice barrier in which she had been inclosed melting in the rush of this kindly current surging up from some invisible source. The lingering tension of her lithe body relaxed under Lorrie's tightening clasp. A delicious lethargy, which she made no effort to resist, soothed every tautened nerve.

"Lorrie," she whispered, "do you really, truly love me as much as that?"

"I adore you, my darling!"

He bent his head, and Wynne felt his wet cheek against her own. Her arms slid up about his neck.

"And I love you, my own dear—husband!" she murmured, and crushed her quivering lips to his.

Harold Applebo, master mariner, poet, court jester, and god from the machine, paddled his own canoe across the freshly ruffled lake, with that of Wynne and Lorrie towing astern. Keeping carefully out of the bridge of the moon, he directed his course to the shadow of the distant shore, and then worked up to the landing, where he arrived just as the high north wind struck down with serious intent.

"Thank you, brother!" said Applebo, apostrophizing this hurried element.

"Blow, gentle breezes, blow! Blow your damndest, and then continue to blow! You have my permission to blow your blooming head off for the next twenty-four hours. Kindly render this broad expanse of water unfit for any navigation except by submarine. As a husband and father and a poet of distinct, if unappreciated, genius I shall not feel justified in running any risks upon its angry waters for quite a while." He glanced up at the glittering stars. "It's as cold as unrequited love. I suppose I might have supplied them with another blanket, but that is a hardship which they must use their ingenuity to overcome," and he lounged up to the camp, where he found the others slightly anxious.

"It's beginning to blow like blazes," said Captain Bell. "I hope Lorrie will have sense enough to start back before it pipes up any harder."

"Your anxiety is superfluous, papa," murmured Applebo. "Wynne and Lorrie are neither on the lake nor in it, nor are they apt to be. They are being driven by the winds of circumstance upon a vaster sea."

"What are you drooling about, simp?" Hermione demanded. "Where are they?"

"Not far, I fancy, as their canoe is safely moored at the landing. And I am not a simp. I am a rosy little cupid with gossamer wings." He yawned, with a click of his big jaws. "There's a certain chill in the air, and I am a-weary from much well-doing. Come, good wife. Let us repair to the sanctity of our attic and woo the drowsy god. Pray do not worry about Wynne and Lorrie. The spirit of that Indian Venus yclept Lively Nightshade has whispered in my ear that they, too, are at their devotions—though she intimated that the god was not a drowsy one."

Loftily ignoring further inquiry as to his oracle, he turned upon his heel and made his way to his room, followed by Hermione, who was fairly devoured by curiosity.

"What in the name of Mike have you been up to now?" demanded that matron.

"I'll tell you when you are in bed and not before," said Applebo.

"Tell me now or I'll maltreat you! Eavesdropping again on nature's secrets, I suppose."

"Oh, more than that, far more!" purred Applebo. "I have been assisting at them."

THE END.



### "I PLANTED ONCE A GARDEN"

I PLANTED once a garden, a real home garden—

Mignonette and foxglove and a red rosebush.

I planted them together, and each day I watched the weather,  
And once at dawn I wondered if I hadn't heard a thrush.

Well—spring has come and vanished; June is but a memory.

All I hear about me is the roar of battle's hell.

Now is the time of blooming—overhead a flare is looming—

And I stooped beside the rosebush, and there I plucked a shell.

DU VERNET RABELL.

# Kisses and Kissing

A Twentieth Century Cameo



By Garnet Warren

YVONNE, to begin with, has hair that ripples where the sunshine touches it, and it dances the dance of the sunset lights. Her lips are soft with young years—they are dewed with youth. Also, when one looks at Yvonne's mouth, conversation naturally becomes pivotal.

"Speaking of the origins of kissing," said Professor Calder, who had been discussing the vegetation of the Triassic age, "science must confess itself puzzled."

"The reasons for the habit would seem sufficiently obvious," ventured the lieutenant, bowing to Yvonne.

"It has undoubtedly attained a highly structural perfection," remarked the widow, in whom I had never discovered any predilection for science.

"It may be that there is a subtler, more expressive art," said she, quite ignoring the professor, "but I have never found one. What pigment can be nearly so expressive as the tremor of the young, naïve mouth? What violin can equal the ecstasies of the eager lip?"

"I speak, of course, of *kissing* in all the prouder spaciousness of the term. I do not allude to that poor, dross metal of exchange which one may term the smack. Neither may some mere muscular encounter with the mouth be deemed a kiss. Lips were made for more gracious deeds.

"When, however, the time be propitious, the fibers eager, the lips

schooled, the object worthy—ah, friends, how povertied becomes mere sounded music! The veins accompany in happy revel the passage of such osculatory symphonies. The kiss! Its origin, to some mean scientist, may be obscure, but to ourselves of the more human race—

"Picture but a warm and ardent lip, velvet with youth, and place it in what age you will. Time is but a setting. Let there be but opportunity. Juxtapose it with young years. Could primeval man ask more? Inviting as a flower, it had been set before him, and was he less than were the bees that he should refuse to drink? A fig for the origins of kissing! Of far greater import is it to know *how* to kiss. Your abrupt, impulsive pressures I cannot countenance. We should treat kissing with more fitting reverence. Let us examine this vibratory felicity, this communicable, tender warmth.

"What should its quality be?"

"Let it, by all means, be soft and tremulously overtuned, to accord with those tender cuticulars, the lips themselves. As for these tight contractions, these labial muscularities which deny the very qualities the lips possess—ugh! Away with all such substitutes! Most delicately shall our lips enwreath themselves. And, as you love me, be not too hasty, either! A nice judiciousness should mark our doing. Let us even pause upon the gracious act till the divine tremulousness

manifest itself. But of course there are lips and lips.

"A generous, full-lipped mouth is by all odds the best for kissing. Your Cupid's bow is merely trivial. It cannot unfold itself so fondly. Its pliant vibrancies are limited. Nor can I wholly approve of the thin-lipped types, though intelligent application can do much for these. And tight-mouthed, compressive lips are for containing pins or kissing relatives.

"It is, indeed, on frail, frail structures that the perfect kiss depends. Elusive as a shadow, many lips may ruin it. A too demanding, too, too masterful lip, for instance, destroys the sense of subtler vibration. A dull, un-eager, unresponsive lip, if anything, is worse. Keep it, if you please, for cooling porridge. Even the rarest, rose-pink-petaled lips themselves may have some set and unadaptive habit. Such lips remind one of a dancing partner whose ways are set in an indurated groove. The rhythms are absent.

"The perfect kiss, in fact, depends upon no single art, however exceptional that art may be. Soul and soul must there be who shall perform the higher functions—pluck, so to speak, the rarer garlands of pleasure. They will be subtly attuned, these two; the selfsame languors must possess them both, the same nice sense effects. An equilibrium there must be which the balance of a breath might well destroy. Such is a kiss. There may be *contacts*, understand me, in which the more finely adjusted balances are lacking—I have known many such—but the kiss supreme, in all the thrill of its responsive tremulations and dewed ecstasies and yielding and unselfish warmth—ah, friends, friends, how precious a gift and how memorable!

"I should sooner, myself, take some neophyte, some little one rich only in the persuasive gift of witching lips—I should sooner, I say, take a flapper un-

skilled than many a performer of years whose faults are hardened and too set. In the one case, the nature is pliable and easy. Its possibilities can be guarded as might a treasure. Step by step, it can be shaped till that radiant day when those sublimated lips shall be gifted to us, perfectly attuned to our every impulse, blessed with that subtle responsiveness which may be likened to nothing better than the bloom on flowers. Such kisses should we cleave to. Kisses less than these may be appreciated by others. They are not for us. Let them be given to the cook.

"There have been many types of salutation with the lips, though whether one might call them kisses is quite a different thing. There was the ancient salute of allegiance to the man—may I say it?—higher up. You knelt before the potentate and kissed his baronial hand, or his slipper, even, beautifully embroidered for the occasion. An advance undoubtedly was made when this nice deference included a lady's hand; a lady's hands are generally nice. Then this homage became social, and it was fair on the cheek, an it please you, sir, whenever you made a lady's acquaintance.

"There are children's kisses—soft and warm and chubby little suctionings which make us wish that childhood never changed. Such kisses bring to us glimpses of Arcady and the golden age. There are playful kisses which we blow to sweethearts and to wives—when they happen to be sweethearts—and these are of love and frolic and dew and sunshine and some happy rainbow spirit which years have been unable to brush away. There are mothers' kisses, and they are of the purer spirit singing through the bodied envelope and making of it noble clay.

"The neck is a pleasant spot to gift with kisses. It must be young, of course, and set from white shoulders



and a lissom breast. Of color, the shade of milk and rose petals it should be. Though there is a particular neck of ivory and amber color that has credentials.

"Kiss such necks roundabout, or, specifically, where the shy and shadowy tendrils wisp. Let us also not forget the eyes. Providence created these for a double purpose. Kiss them gently and as one would sip some high, Olympian nectar. Then there's the valley between lip and chin. It is not well, however, to be too precise upon such matters. They are merely points of choice, and personal.

"There is the matter of environment. Some prefer the automobile. For this, I confess, I have no regard; it seems inconducive to the raptured calm. The shaking seems to interfere. Yet in the matter of the time and place I am not exigent; all that I ask is seclusion and the Man. Moonlight is, I admit, romantic, but then so is almost anything if He be right. The pleasant order of a cozy room is desirable. If there is some

unsuspecting mama near by, so much the better. That adds a piquance to the thing.

"Finally there comes the tragedy of kissing. That comes with age. Alas, that we should grow so skillful as we grow so old, that our priceless wares should be hidden by our wrinkles and our yellow skins! Youth sparkles by us. It passes us unheeding and schools itself by younger instruments. Our art, so fully yielding, withers for lack of use."

The widow's voice stilled itself, its cadence expiring like a sigh or the supreme declension of one of her own kisses. For a moment one felt the hallowed silence of unvoiced applause. Then Yvonne remarked that she had to be going. The lieutenant moved from my side toward the door. Did their footsteps pause as they passed through the little anteroom toward the hall? I could never be quite sure. The professor was remarking that archæology was among the most fascinating of subjects.



## THE DEAD LOVER

I AM here in the cold.  
Oh, my Love, let me in  
And to-morrow the parson  
Will shrive us of sin.

Oh, woe's me, my Love,  
There's a man with you there,  
With his mouth on your mouth  
And his hand on your hair.

And you're happy, and laugh,  
And the firelight glows red—  
So soon I'm forgotten,  
I think I am dead!

HARRY KEMP.

# Ainslee's Book of the Month

HOME FIRES IN FRANCE, by Dorothy Canfield. Henry Holt & Co., New York. \$1.35.

**W**HAT was it really like? That is the demand which readers are going to make on every fiction writer who claims the authority to set his scenes in Europe in the days of the war. Superficial tittle-tattle and cheap heroics will be impatiently rejected. Unless we can be brought into contact with life as it was lived under the shadow of the German menace, we shall prefer Romance with a capital R and no flavor of bloodshed.

"Homes Fires in France," by Dorothy Canfield, fulfills these requirements. With dozens of important novels clamoring for attention, it has been chosen as the first book to be recommended in this new department, designed to serve as a guidepost to the worth-while fiction of the day.

The author writes from the inside out. She knows France, not as a matter of geography and statistics, but intimately, lovingly. In describing a village in the war zone, her best paragraphs are given to the walled backyard gardens, characteristic of France, but at the existence of which tourists and soldiers marching through never even guess. She casually mentions the fact that every family breeds rabbits, and explains the "miraculously neat and ordered aspect of French landscapes" by telling how old women scour the roadsides for grass and succulent weeds for the innumerable hutches.

Miss Canfield's method is an effective combination of fiction and pungent journalism. The chapters are written in short-story form, but bear every evi-

dence of being records of actual events, selected with discrimination for their narrative value. In the preface, it is stated that the book is "a true setting forth of personalities and experiences, French and American, under the influence of war." It is something more than that. It is a series of word pictures, the composite effect of which is a portrait of France, tragic, beautiful, and unconquerable.

The following are among the more interesting chapters:

"The Permissionaire" describes how a soldier and his wife return to their ruined home near Noyon, evacuated by the enemy in 1917. The soldier has three weeks' leave, every waking moment of which he spends in smoothing away the scars of war. When he starts back to the trenches, he has to turn hurriedly on his tracks. He is carrying his rake. He has forgotten his gun.

"A Little Kansas Leaven" is the astonishing story of a girl clerk in a small-town store west of the Mississippi, who "gets hep" to the war. She draws her savings from the bank and goes to Paris to do what she can. She proves to be invaluable to a certain amateur charity, but when she resigns because her money is spent, no one thinks of offering her a salary to stay. War workers are supposed in that set to be wealthy ladies of leisure, despite all appearances to the contrary. The irony of the situation is delightful.

"Hats," "A Honeymoon," and "La Pharmacienne" are war-time studies which round out and lend value to a truly original book. W. A. R.



## PLAYS AND PLAYERS

By

ALAN DALE

THREE suffering, cheerless, and penitential "heroines," who have loved not at all sapiently, but abominably well, stand forth conspicuously in three very recent theatrical productions, and prove to us that the wronged lady, like the poor, is always with us. Impossible to escape her. Critics filled to the brim with perfectly bee-yoo-ti-ful thoughts—and they nearly all are!—may inveigh against conditions that render this brand of heroine necessary, but it is more and more manifest that if she were abolished, there would be no critics, for the reason that there would be no plays to criticize. We could find it in our nice, comfortable hearts to wish that the pretty little heroine in white muslin, with a baby-blue sash and dear little ringlets trickling down her back, were dramatic. It would be so easy. But the sugary heroine palls and gives rise to a sort of saccharine dyspepsia that is rather dreadful. We have had several cases of it this season. Even the critics with the perfectly bee-yoo-ti-ful thoughts have suffered. I look at it this way—why, being allowed one lump of sugar with my coffee when I crave at least three, should I revel in a heroine simply dipped in sugar? It seems so reckless—so wasteful!

Even Mr. Belasco, who has been marketing sugar for the last two years—perhaps for longer than that—has de-

cided against tantalizing the sugar-hungry public by offering it a molasses-coated heroine in these sugarless days. Belasco, who is popularly supposed to be an expert at analyzing the public pulse, has returned to the suffering, cheerless, and penitential heroine, who, after all, is emotional. A sob sister, for a change, surely should have a chance. So, after the pleasingly innocuous comedies known as "The Boomerang" and "Polly With a Past," enter Belasco with Edward Knoblock's play entitled "Tiger! Tiger!" and Miss Frances Starr as the lachrymose one, the exclamatory name referring to the so-called brute that is asleep in all of us.

Now, lachrymosely penitential heroines usually—in plays—possess some sort of what is popularly known as "class." In the Knoblock play, *Sally* is daringly offered as a cook. Positively a cook! And it was that very selection of a calling that actually interfered with the sentimentality of the play. For, after all, can one reconcile pathos with cookery? I can't. I always think of a cook on the stage as a humorous lady interpreted most successfully by such actresses as May Vokes or Maude Eburne. Somehow or other, that has been my education. I dare say that cooks sorrow and weep like other people; their hearts may ache just as if they were ladies' maids, or manicurists, or even typists—and typists

can actually bleed!—but we are not accustomed to such manifestations of acute distress from the kitchen president. We do not mind when her sweetheart is the adjacent policeman or the polite butler or even the iceman—in fact, the iceman is delightful for cook—but when this sweetheart turns out to be a particularly nonsusceptible British member of Parliament, very fastidious and aristocratic, then we rebel. At least our traditional education rebels.

And that was it. *Sally*, in "Tiger! Tiger!" the Knoblock play, produced by David Belasco, was found in the street, casually, by the member of Parliament, brought to his "chambers"—and "chambers" are invariably awfully *bung-tung*—and instantly fallen in love with. In the first stages of his delirium, he wotted not that she was a cook. He knew that she "worked," but the idea that she made puddings, roasted joints, and hashed potatoes was kept from him. The dearness of it all! The immaculate romance!

For two years she was his—not his cook, but his love! She had a "day out" every Toosday, and that she spent with him. He was very much interested in the passage of a bill in Parliament, legitimatizing war babies, and his "career" was extraordinarily brilliant. She helped him—possibly because she *didn't* cook his meals. If you can imagine a British member of Parliament actually profiting by the good advice of a little cook, your imagination is as vivid as that of Edward Knoblock. Mournfully, I confess that mine isn't. I thought it all inordinately funny—really a scream—but this was a wrong attitude. It was extremely pathetic, and even tear-drenched.

This was pathetic, too! One night, when she visited him, he noticed that her hair exhaled some dreadful perfume and spoke to her about it. She easily explained everything. She had been cooking cabbage, and the more or

less pungent odor of that plebeian vegetable had clung to her tresses. Opining that her Parliamentary lover might not enjoy souvenirs of cabbage in her tresses, she bought some "per-fume" and doused it over her hair. Who but a Knoblock could have thought of such a dainty, feminine, poetic sacrifice? Who but a Belasco could have passed it across the footlights without stubbing it on the foot of irreverent laughter?

She was always suffering, cheerless, and penitential. She grew to know that he was ashamed of her—particularly when he asked her to wait in his kitchen while he "received" the lovely *Evelyn Greer*, whom he would have married if he could have found sentimental interest in the lady. Poor *Sally*, asked to wait in a kitchen, where she peeled potatoes and basted chickens! This, too, was meant for pathos, and I never got it. And so the play went on to its penitential close, when the British member of Parliament was killed in war, and the little cook lady wedded the carpenter, who was aware that she had a "past."

Lest it should seem that the British member of Parliament went a bit too far in his kitchen love, I may as well add—and it will clear Knoblock and Belasco of undue exaggeration—that little cook had "gone wrong" before she met with her legislative lover. It would have been dreadful to omit that detail. International complications might have arisen, don't you know. Surely a curious play, but amusing. All the solemnities of the penitential heroine were saddled upon a little cook, who for once wasn't a "character." Perhaps, if cooks in real life were as funny as they are on the stage, Miss Frances Starr might have coaxed forth a few furtive tears for the poor creature. But this was impossible. Who could sympathize with this cook, who spent her "Toosdays out" in the illicit companion-

ship of a member of Parliament? Possibly she would get good "references" and absurd wages!

Miss Frances Starr did the best she could under the trying circumstances. Hers was no simple task. Usually Miss Starr is able, in all her impersonations, to achieve something that touches beneath the surface. She is an adept at the surreptitious sob. But not in this rôle. I consider it a remarkable feat that the audience did not laugh in the wrong place. And it didn't, thanks to Miss Starr, who must have felt that she stood on crumbling ground. All that a cast could do for such a play, this cast did. It inclosed Lionel Atwill, whose fervent kisses must have singed the cook's lips; O. P. Heggie, who is an admirable artist; and Whitford Kane, who is invariably humorous. In fact, it was a splendid cast, and "Tiger! Tiger!" was produced in the best Belasco manner. It seemed to give us a new brand of penitential heroine, but an audacious one.

We have been taught to laugh at cook on the stage, not to weep with her. Mr. Belasco undertook to reform our education, but it will take a long time to win results. If cooks are to be emotional, lachrymose heroines, then we must really start afresh. Unluckily Mr. Belasco's amendment comes too late for many tragedy queens to profit by. Think of Sarah Bernhardt as a weeping cook and imagine how effective she might be! But although the Immortal Sarah is still young in spirit and splashed with juvenile energy, I never expect to see her "emote" from the culinary recesses of the kitchen.

"The Riddle: Woman" had another suffering, cheerless, and penitential heroine. This time she was Copenhagenesque, so she was easier to cope with. We are not as familiar with the penitential ones of Copenhagen as we are with those who flourish in "our midst." In this play, by Charlotte E.

Wells and Dorothy Donnelly, who acknowledged their indebtedness to a Danish play by C. Jacobi, one bold, bad man rampaged around and made nearly all the feminine members of the cast suffer and grow penitential. The real heroine was *Lilla Olrik*, and the bold, bad man, *Count Erik Elsing*, had treated her very badly. Just the same she had married quite nicely—according to stage custom—and was paying blackmail to his countship. It was quite harrowing, for *Lilla* was a sweet lady with a tender heart, and very "good form." One expects these penitential ones to be "good form." Therefore, "The Riddle: Woman" was not surprising like the Belasco production. *Lilla* was just ordinarily wronged, in the ordinary theatrical way.

Another had been in the toils of this nefarious count—an unmarried woman who became the mother of his child and who also paid him blackmail. Then there was a third, who was an ingénue, and whom he was merely "after." I use the word "after" advisedly. In cases like this, a villain is always "after" a girl. One cannot consider it otherwise. It may sound slangy. It isn't. A funny thing happened on the opening night of this play. And by the bye, my remarks nearly always refer to opening nights. This villain was spoken of so perpetually, his deeds seemed so black and sinister, his methods with the weaker sex appeared to be so irresistible, that when he actually appeared, the audience burst into laughter. Instead of suggesting some dashing Don Juan, or some particularly fascinating and persuasive Lothario, a meek-looking and insipid gentleman stepped forth and routed all anticipations. And then the audience, as I said, laughed. It was such a shock to see this home breaker in the flesh, and to realize that he surely wasn't "such-a-much." A New York audience has an undaunted sense of humor. One can't get away from that

fact. In plays of this sort, there is always a latent desire to laugh in the wrong place, and stage managers know this and work very assiduously to prevent it. But sometimes it cannot be prevented, even with the best of intentions. Moreover, I presume that if the play meant anything at all—and my opinion is that it didn't—its title, "The Riddle: Woman," must have had something to do with the utterly insipid quality of the man who made the suffering heroines so cheerless and penitential. In that case, it was a good title.

I don't say that one can ever fathom the loves of women. The man who could do it would be a genius. But we like to believe, for purposes of argument, that the insistently loved one is pleasant to look at, romantic in demeanor, and idealistic in talk. In "The Riddle: Woman," the man who wrecked so much feminine happiness wore baggy trousers and looked perpetually depressed. It was all rather droll, and quite a blow to lovers of romance. *Lilla* and *Kristine* were frightfully miserable, and it was their object to save the ingénue from the clutches of the betrayer. There was not one ray of humor in the whole thing except that which emerged when *Count Erik* came forth, after announcement as a veritable lion, to suggest a particularly tame cat. It was baffling.

Madame Bertha Kalich, an extremely interesting actress, with a peculiarly repressed personality, played the *main* heroine very excellently. You always wondered what she was going to do, although of course, in your heart of hearts, you knew. Madame Kalich has artistic perception and repose. She is as interesting to watch when she has no lines to speak as when she delivers the best rounded sentences. The two other women were Miss Chrystal Herne and Miss Beatrice Allen. The villain whom sophisticated New Yorkers craved to get a peep at—and then laughed at—

was poor Mr. A. E. Anson. I call him "poor" because the fate of any man who is painted in such glaring colors and then can't glare is rather plaintive, don't you think?

The third play on my list of suffering, penitential heroine dramas is "The Big Chance" at the Forty-eighth Street Theater. The heroine in this play was the very sort of girl whom all theatrical experience has taught you *must* be wronged. In other words, she was a mill hand. Having been wronged for six weeks, she went back to the mill, and the mill "looked good" to her, poor soul! Then she "took up"—that is the correct expression, I believe; if not, let me keep it—with a worthless gentleman called *Charlie* and loved him heartily.

I always think that these cheerless and penitential heroines who talk by the yard about their experiences are bores. *Mary*, in "The Big Chance," was surely that. Oh, how chatty she was, and how filled to the very brim with philosophy! In one instance, she confided in old *Mrs. Malloy* that it was best not to watch her daughter too closely, for girls needed experience, and she was very glad that she had gone through hers! I thought that awfully kind of her—wishing her own experiences upon another! She was a penitential heroine with a vengeance! But such a chatterbox! She certainly didn't believe, with the Spartan boy, that it was wise to suffer in silence.

In this play, everybody ate delicatessen. The heroine was surrounded by a very shifty bunch, and I suppose delicatessen is good for shiftiness. It must be. It doesn't seem good for anything else. The point of the whole play was neither more nor less than our old friend Regeneration. You can make people on the stage as awful as you like—in fact, there is no limit to their frightfulness—if you regenerate



them before it is time to go home. Just let them sin picturesquely until ten-forty-five, and between that hour and eleven regenerate them. Then the public will say that it is a play with a moral, and perfectly righteous critics will declare that it teaches a lesson—knowing full well in their hearts that, if it did, it would play to empty benches. All the nefarious characters in "The Big Chance" went to the war—that was the chance—and came back wiser and better men. Miss Mary Nash was the suffering one in this play, and she worked with a zeal worthy of a better cause. But "The Big Chance" appeared to possess some sort of appeal, and it was loud enough to do it.

Instead of dealing with suffering, penitential heroines, I should have devoted the space at my disposal to a

consideration of Maeterlinck's fantasy, "The Betrothal," which was produced by Winthrop Ames at the Shubert Theater. However, I have no distinct regrets. "The Betrothal," as a sequel to "The Blue Bird," was inferior to that delightfully wistful bit of literature. It had charm and imagination and poesy, but in its stage form, it was not nearly as satisfactory as in its book form. I read it, and was delighted; I saw it, and was disappointed. Nor did the acting reach any point of elevation. The English language was neglected. Voices were anything, but imaginative, and "The Betrothal" seemed to lack delicacy—at least in its presentation.

As for "The Remnant," "Little Simplicity," "Home Again," "Be Calm, Camilla," "Peter's Mother," and "Freedom"—well, let them pass.



### THE BITTEREST THING

**Y**OU are dead, dead; and there is laughter still.

You are dead, dead; and on the floor below  
Those lovers kiss and cuff; and lovers will  
Play through their crazy game we used to know,  
Play through their silly game; and youth will be  
In all the men whom I shall pass and see,  
In all the young girls chatting—and in me.  
I, too, will laugh again and lift my head,  
Forgetting you, to hear some stranger's call.  
This is the bitterest thing to know of all—  
*I, too, will laugh, though you, my love, are dead.*

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.

## Talks With Ainslee's Readers

WITH the coming of peace, many magazines which have been boring their readers with war stories scarcely to be distinguished from the dispatches in the daily newspapers are hastening to right about face. AINSLEE'S is in the fortunate position of having no unsound policy to reverse. Throughout the war we have published strong, original, entertaining love fiction of the type that readers will always like. The other day we received a letter from France which made us feel rather pleased with ourselves. "I think you get splendid stuff on AINSLEE'S," wrote our correspondent. "And how right you are not to specialize in war stories! At this terrible time, one turns to a magazine in the hope of finding rest and refreshment. Here in France, where we have been breathing war for four years, a magazine like AINSLEE'S is a godsend. Certainly the soldiers find it so."

OF course, the judicious use of war "interest" has been legitimate and will continue to be so. And this leads us directly to our new May Edginton serial, the first installment of which will be printed in the March number. It is called "The Price of Wings." The hero is a British aviator, Stretton Grenfell, handsome and extremely popular with women. A little scornful of the ease with which he conquers feminine hearts, his one deep passion is for a new type of machine, his own invention, which he is determined to build and offer to the government. But Lieutenant Grenfell is as poor as he is brilliant. It is logical, inevitable, that he should use women

who adore him to push his ambitions. The two principal female characters are Dorothy Allegra, who drives an automobile for the Royal Flying Corps, and Fulvia Denbigh, a theatrical star. Sharply contrasted in type, they wage an amorous duel that is distinctly out of the ordinary. "The love-story thread runs strongly and consistently throughout and is the main interest, the army setting being only the vehicle to carry it," Miss Edginton herself writes us regarding this serial. "We are mainly concerned with these people's doings when not occupied with military duty."

The generous program for March also includes a complete novelette, "In All Fairness," by Margaretta Tuttle. This story is the crowning adventure befalling Anne Hamelton, the new and fascinating heroine to whom you have been introduced in shorter tales in recent issues of AINSLEE'S. Anne, you will remember, has a talent for smoothing out the troubles of her friends. This time the problem is her own, and she solves it with finesse.

CACTUS FLOWER," by June Willard, heads the long list of strong short stories in the next number. The scene is laid on the Riviera. "The Weaving of the Spell," by Vennette Herron, is a tropical tale by a writer who we feel sure is going to prove one of your favorites. We expect soon to give you a complete novelette by her. "Not Even a Sinner," by Du Vernet Rabell, and "The Little Brown Sword," by Viola Brothers Shore, are memorable love stories, because, in addition to thrills in abundance, they both have ideas behind them.

Vic  
H  
SUP  
with  
Oblo  
Rubb  
Butt

WOM  
guter  
Velvet  
stand s  
patrioti  
R  
They p  
and th  
of getti  
having  
OBL  
styles for  
GEOR

for C



**WOMEN** doing work that calls for unusual physical exertion enjoy garter comfort and security by wearing Velvet Grip Hose Supporters. They stand strain, give long wear and render patriotic service by

### Reducing Hosiery Bills

They prevent tearing and drop stitches and thus **save stockings**. To make sure of getting Velvet Grip look for the clasp having the button that is

**OBLONG and ALL RUBBER**

Styles for women, misses and children sold everywhere  
**GEORGE FROST CO., MAKERS, BOSTON**



## A Three Generation Favorite

The test of time is behind Piso's. 54 years of popularity serve to establish Piso's as the reliable relief for coughs and colds. Piso's also allays hoarseness, soothes throat irritation and eases throat tickle. Keep Piso's handy ready to use at the first sign of a cough. 30c a bottle, all druggists.

Contains No Opiate  
Safe for Young and Old

# PISO'S

## for Coughs & Colds



## MONEY or Your LIFE

It's bad enough to be held up and robbed of your money and your watch.

But, to allow waste matter to be "held up" in your intestines may be far more serious. You can get more money; you can buy another watch. You may never be able to get your health back.

Constipation is the "hold up" man of the human system. The food waste it holds up in your lower intestines decays and generates poisons. A poisoned system is the result.

Over 90% of human illness has its origin in the intestinal canal. Nature normally tries to get rid of this poisonous waste. But when she can't do the work single-handed, you must help her, in her own way. *The Nujol Treatment is nature's way.*

The pills—salts—castor oil—mineral water habits are not nature's way. They play constipation's game—forcing and upsetting the system.

Nujol acts easily, harmlessly, naturally—makes you "regular as clockwork."

**Warning:** Nujol is sold only in sealed bottles bearing the Nujol Trade Mark. Insist on Nujol. At all drug stores in U. S. and Canada. You may suffer from substitutes.

**Nujol Laboratories**  
STANDARD OIL CO. (NEW JERSEY)  
50 Broadway, New York

## Nujol For Constipation

MADE IN U.S.A.

Regular as Clockwork

Nujol Laboratories, Standard Oil Co. (New Jersey), Room 112-F, 60 Broadway, New York. Please send me free booklet "Thirty Feet of Danger."



# A-K TABLETS

FOR  
Grippe  
Cold  
in the  
Head

**Headaches  
Neuralgias  
Spanish Influenza  
Women's Aches and Ills  
Rheumatic and Sciatic Pains**  
Ask Your Druggist for A-K Tablets  
Sold in Convenient Pocket Packages

Small Size  Dozen Size  
**10c** **25c**


See Monogram **A** on the Genuine  
The Antikamnia Remedy Company  
St. Louis, Mo.

# NUXATED

"I believe my own great physical activity is due to my personal use of Nuxated Iron," says Former Health Commissioner Wm. R. Kerr, of the City of Chicago. "From my own experience with Nuxated Iron I feel it is such a valuable blood and body building preparation that it ought to be used in every hospital and prescribed by every physician in the country. Nuxated Iron helps to make healthier women and stronger, sturdier men. Used by more than 3,000,000 people annually in this country alone." Increases the strength and endurance of weak, run-down, nervous folks in two weeks' time, in many cases. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. At all good drug-gists.

# IRON

**DIAMOND BARGAINS**



**Why Pay Full Prices?**  
We'll send you any diamond in our immense stock on approval. Then try to match it at fully 80% more or you can send it back. These amazing savings continually proved by customers' letters.  
**Diamond Banking** - the business of this million dollar firm - for nearly 3/4 of a century - loaning money upon diamonds as security. When these loans are not paid, diamonds are sold to get our money back. So why pay full prices?  
**Send for Jos. DeRoy & Sons Bulletin**  
Send your name and address. We'll send free bargain bulletin. Radically different from ordinary catalogues.  
**Jos. DeRoy & Sons** 2323 Delroy Bldg., Pittsburgh, Pa.

## Don't Wear a Truss



**BROOKS' APPLIANCE**, the modern scientific invention, the wonderful new discovery that relieves rupture will be sent on trial. No obnoxious springs or pads. Has automatic Air Cushions. Binds and draws the broken parts together as you would a broken limb. No calico. No lies. Durable, cheap. Sent on trial to prove it. Protected by U. S. patents. Catalogue and measure blanks mailed free. Send name and address today.

C. E. BROOKS, 212B State Street, Marshall, Mich.

**IN THIS DAY AND AGE** attention to your appearance is an absolute necessity if you expect to make the most out of life. Not only should you wish to appear as attractive as possible for your own self-satisfaction, which is alone well worth your efforts, but you will find this world in general judging you greatly, if not wholly, by your "looks," therefore it pays to "look your best" at all times. Permit no one to see you looking otherwise; it will injure your welfare! Upon the impression you constantly make rests the future or success of your life. Which is to be your ultimate destiny? My new *Nose-Shaper* "TRILETY" (Model 84) corrects now ill-shaped noses without operation, quickly, safely and permanently. It pleasantly does not interfere with one's occupation, being worn at night.

**YOU HAVE A BEAUTIFUL FACE BUT YOUR NOSE?**



Before After

Write today for free booklet, which tells you how to correct ill-shaped noses without cost if not satisfied.

**M. TRILETY, Face Specialist, 1044 Ackerman Bldg., Birmingham, Ala.**

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements

I got home with my son Thurman all right and I am thankful for what you all did for him. When I took him to your Sanitarium April the 15th, 1918, he walked on top of his foot but now he walks flat and straight. I wish every crippled child could come to your Sanitarium and get treated for I know you could do them good.

Very truly yours,

John Farley,

618 N. 7th St., Chickasha, Okla.

For details, write Mr. Farley or the Sanitarium. B 3



## Deformed By Infantile Paralysis

Thurman Farley, Chickasha, Okla., walked on the side of his left foot when he came to the McLain Sanitarium for treatment of Infantile Paralysis. His father's letter above tells the result of that treatment. The photographs prove his statements.

### For Crippled Children

The McLain Sanitarium is a thoroughly equipped private institution devoted exclusively to the treatment of Club Feet, Infantile Paralysis, Spinal Diseases and Deformities, Wry Neck, Hip Disease, Diseases of the joints, especially as found in children and younger adults. Our book, "Deformities and Paralysis" - also "Book of References", sent free.

The McLain Orthopedic Sanitarium,  
864 Aubert Ave. St. Louis, Mo.

FREE

\$20

UKULELE Hawaiian Guitar, Violin, Mandolin, Guitar, Cornet or Banjo

Wonderful new system of teaching note music by mail. To first pupils in each locality, we'll give a \$20 superb Violin, Mandolin, Ukulele, Guitar, Hawaiian Guitar, Cornet or Banjo absolutely free. Very small charge for lessons only as per. We guarantee success or no charge. Complete outfit free. Write at once—no obligation.

SHERRILL SCHOOL OF MUSIC, Dept. 471, CHICAGO, ILL.

## GET RID OF THAT FAT

### Free Trial Treatment on Request

Ask also for my "pay-when-reduced" offer. My treatment has often reduced at the rate of a pound a day. No dieting, no exercise, absolutely safe and sure method.

Mrs. E. Bateman writes:—Have taken your treatment and it is wonderful how it reduces. It does just as you say. I have reduced a pound a day and feel fine.

Dr. Anna Schmidt writes:—I weighed 178 pounds before I started your treatment and I now weigh 158 pounds. You can print this if you like.

These are just examples of what my treatment can accomplish. Let me send you more proof my expense.

DR. R. NEWMAN, Licensed Physician

515th Avenue, New York :: :: Desk M-462

Please mention this magazine when answering advertisements



CHASE  
Plush  
Motor Car  
Robes

Made by Sanford Mills

Famous since 1867—the choice today

### Durable · Luxurious Beautiful · Warm

Chase Plush Robes will outwear, many times over, other woven robes—remaining fast in color and intact over a long period of severe usage.

They Protect Like the Coat of Fur on Animals

Made of the choicest materials—nothing for dust or germs to adhere to—sanitary and easily cleansed. Scores of unique, wonderful patterns.

AT YOUR DEALER'S—WRITE FOR CATALOG

L. C. CHASE & CO., BOSTON

NEW YORK CHICAGO DETROIT SAN FRANCISCO

Leaders in Manufacturing Since 1847



## Get the Drop on that Cough

Stop your cough before it stops you! Save needless doctor bills. You can stop the incipient cold and the heavy, rasping cough with



They taste good—they are good for the whole family, from the baby up. For seventeen years, millions of users have been proving it. Get them anywhere from coast to coast.

Good for the Throat—  
Bad for the Cough.

DEAN MEDICINE CO.  
Milwaukee, Wis.

5¢

### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

#### Agents and Help Wanted

Agents: Flexo-glazed Miniature portraits in gold rings, etc. Other good lines for the soldier's family. Make money. Pan American Supply Co., 448-A X, No. Wells St., Chicago, Ill.

AGENTS—200% Profit. Wonderful little article. Something new: sells like wildfire. Carry rich in pocket. Write at once for free sample. Albert Mills, Mgr., 6142 American Building, Cincinnati, Ohio.

#### Motion Picture Plays

\$50—\$100 weekly writing Moving Picture Plays. Get free book; valuable information; prize offer. Photo Playwright College, Box 278 X Y 4, Chicago.

#### Patents and Lawyers

PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS. Send Sketch or Model for actual search and report. Write for booklet of instructions on patent practice and procedure. Prompt personal service. George P. Kimmel, Patent Lawyer, 13N, Oriental Bldg., Washington, D. C.

#### Patents and Lawyers—Continued

PATENTS THAT PROTECT. Highest references. Rates reasonable. Best results. Promptness assured. Watson E. Coleman, Patent Lawyer, 624 F Street, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS. Write for Free Illustrated Guide Book. Send model or sketch and description for free opinion of its patentable nature. Highest references. Prompt Attention. Reasonable Terms. Victor J. Evans & Co., 767 Ninth, Washington, D. C.

#### Songs, Poems, etc.

Write a Song—on any subject. I compose music and guarantee publication. Send words today. Thomas Merlín, 222 Reaper Block, Chicago.

SONGWRITERS—Send your poems today for best offer and immediate publication. Free examination. Music composed. Booklet on request. Authors & Composers Service Co., Suite 516, 1433 Broadway, New York.

WRITE the Words for a Song. We revise poems, write music and guarantee to secure publication. Submit poems on any subject. Broadway Studios, 159C Fitzgerald Building, New York.

## OIL DIVIDENDS

Don't you want to know what oil stocks are paying good dividends, which promise big future dividends, and which are declining? Then you should read OIL DIVIDENDS, a twice-a-month magazine devoted to the oil industry, written for investors and owners of oil securities. You can have this magazine FREE for 3 months, mailed to your address, just by asking for it.

3 Months' Trial Subscription **FREE**

Address Either Office

Serlis & Company

1 Wall St., New York 10 S. La Salle St., Chicago



#### Bring Out the Hidden Beauty

Beneath the soiled, discolored, faded or aged complexion is one fair to look upon. Mercolized Wax gently, gently absorbs the devitalized surface skin, revealing the young, fresh, beautiful skin underneath. Used by refined women who prefer complexion of naturalness. Have you tried it?

In our summer package, with directions for use, sold by all druggists.

#### Songs, Poems—Continued

WRITE words for a song. We music, guarantee publisher's acceptance. Submit poems on patriotic love or any subject. Chester Music, 538 S. Dearborn St., Suite 101, Chicago.

SONGWRITERS—Submit your poems now for free examination and advice. Valuable booklet explains our original methods of music composing, copyrighting and obtaining free publication or sale of songs. Sent Free on request. Learn the truth from a most successful concern. Satisfaction guaranteed. Knickerbocker Studios, 106 Galety Building, New York.

#### Short Stories

WANTED—Stories. Articles. We want for new magazine. We pay outstanding. Handwritten MSS. accepted. Send MSS. to Woman's National Magazine, Desk 466, Washington.

#### Personal

LET MADAME KOSMOS help by giving your life prediction, birth-date and dime. De La Kosmos, Box 291 X, Louisville.



Boys and Girls  
Clear the Skin  
with Cuticura

Druggists: Soap, Ointment, Tablets 25c. each.

## TYPEWRITER SENSATION

Latest Model Visible Typewriter with back-spacer, tabulator, two-color ribbon, etc. Every late style feature, modern operating convenience. Perfect appearance, precision and absolute dependability. Sent anywhere on approval. Catalog and special price FREE.

Harry A. Smith, 831

218 N. Wells St., Chicago



# Uncle Sam Makes 'Em Strong

Reports from France indicate the delight and surprise of the French at beholding our hardy, robust National Army.

Men who were doubled up over desks, clerks from dry-goods stores, and members of every sedentary occupation have within the short space of a year been developed into strong, vigorous men.

How was this miracle performed? Uncle Sam knows, because he did it. *Just how* is explained by a splendid course of exercises and gymnastics that has been prepared by American experts for use in our army. The U. S. MANUAL OF PHYSICAL TRAINING tells how every man can improve his physical condition, no matter what it may be at present.

We publish a verbatim edition of the official document. It contains nearly 200 half-tone cuts illustrative of the different exercises, posed by West Point Cadets. Its price—50 cents—is little for such a complete guide to health and vigor. Throw away the quack medicines that you are taking and invest a small portion of their cost in this book, which will return you a bigger percentage of profit than a like amount ever did before.



**PRICE—50c PER COPY**

**Profusely Illustrated**

If sent by mail, add 5 cents per copy to cover postage.

---

**STREET & SMITH CORPORATION, Publishers**  
79 SEVENTH AVENUE    ::    ::    NEW YORK CITY



How Our 23 Allies Say—  
Good Teeth, Good Health, follow the use of

# COLGATE'S

## RIBBON DENTAL CREAM

REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

### Belgium

Bonnes dents. Une  
bonne santé suit  
l'usage de la crème  
dentifrice Colgate's  
Ribbon.

### Brazil

Dentes sãos e boa  
saúde resultam do  
emprego do Creme  
Pita de Colgate,  
para os Dentes.

### Costa Rica

Buena dentadura.  
El empleo de la  
Crema Dentifrica  
de Colgate hace que  
se goce de buena  
salud.

### Cuba

Buena dentadura—  
buena salud  
resultan del uso de  
la Crema Dental  
cinta de Colgate.

### France

Pour bien vous  
porter soignez  
vos dents avec la  
Crème Dentifrice  
Colgate.

### Great Britain

Good Teeth—Good  
Health follow the  
use of Colgate's  
Ribbon Dental  
Cream.

### Greece

Kalá 'Yvria eler  
Tá anorthosia  
Tis poierous  
Koiour, Obivour  
Tis Kolivour.

### Guatemala

Buena dentadura.  
El empleo de la  
Crema Dentifrica  
de Colgate hace que  
se goce de buena  
salud.

### Haiti

Bonnes dents, bonne  
santé, sont assurées  
par l'usage de la  
Crème dentifrice en  
tube de Colgate.

### Honduras

Buena dentadura—  
El empleo de la  
Crema Dentifrica  
de Colgate hace que  
se goce de buena  
salud.

IN any language proper care of the teeth  
is always translated into better health.

Colgate's Ribbon Dental Cream offers  
itself as an ally in the splendid cause of  
Good Health—an efficient ally. It cleans  
thoroughly; is safe from the danger of  
powerful drugs; and has a delicious flavor.  
Make it your ally, and your family's, for  
"Good Teeth—Good Health."

Est. 1886 COLGATE & CO. New York

NOTE—During the preparation of this advertisement the Czechoslovak nation has been  
recognized by our Government; and the national  
flag of Siam has been changed. It was too late  
to include these—which we regret. The Czechoslovak  
flag shows two equal horizontal stripes,  
white above and red beneath; the new Siamese  
flag shows five horizontal stripes—red,  
white, blue, white, red—the  
blue being double width.

### Liberia

Good Teeth—Good  
Health follow the  
use of Colgate's  
Ribbon Dental  
Cream.

### Montenegro

Добра зуби и добро  
ЗДРАВЉЕ ДОЂАЈЕ ОД  
ПОУКОБНЕ ЗАШТИТЕ  
ЗУБА КОГАТЕ.

### Nicaragua

Buena dentadura.  
El empleo de la  
Crema Dentifrica  
de Colgate hace que  
se goce de buena  
salud.

### Panama

Buena dentadura.  
El empleo de la  
Crema Dentifrica  
de Colgate hace que  
se goce de buena  
salud.

### Portugal

Dentes sãos e boa  
saúde resultam do  
emprego do Creme  
Pita de Colgate,  
para os Dentes.

### Romania

Dozi zubi — dăruiește  
o bună stare, folosind  
crema amănitoare,  
Pasta de zăbzi a lui  
Colgate.

### Russia

Хорошие зубы — это  
лучшее средство  
для здоровья  
лица.

### San Marino

L'uso della pasta  
dentifrica Colgate  
conserva i denti in  
buono stato ciò che  
è garanzia di buona  
salute.

### Serbia

Добра зуби и добро  
ЗДРАВЉЕ ДОЂАЈЕ ОД  
ПОУКОБНЕ ЗАШТИТЕ  
ЗУБА КОГАТЕ.

### Siam

การดูแลสุขภาพฟัน  
และการมีสุขภาพที่ดี  
นั้นขึ้นอยู่กับ  
การดูแลสุขภาพฟัน  
ด้วยครีม  
ป้องกันฟัน  
ของ Colgate

### China

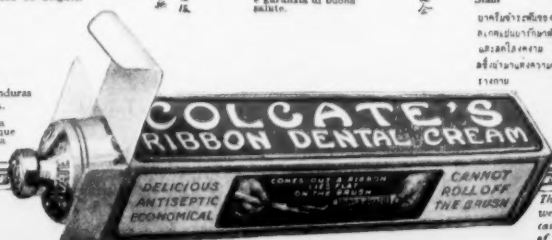
牙齒  
健康  
是  
身體  
健康  
之  
基礎  
牙齒  
健康  
是  
身體  
健康  
之  
基礎

### Japan

歯  
の  
健康  
は  
身  
體  
の  
健康  
の  
基礎  
歯  
の  
健康  
は  
身  
體  
の  
健康  
の  
基礎

### Italy

L'uso della pasta  
dentifrica Colgate  
conserva i denti in  
buono stato ciò che  
è garanzia di buona  
salute.



The translations shown  
were made in the  
cases by the Consular  
of the respective